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EARLY ESSAYS OF COMTE

EARLY ESSAYS
ON
SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

AUGUSTE COMTE

BY
HENRY DIX HUTTON
BARRISTER-AT-LAW

A NEW EDITION WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES,
AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
FREDERIC HARRISON



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INTRODUCTION
BY FREDERIC HARRISON

At the end of the final volume of his principal work—*the* Positive Polity—continuing his forecast of the destiny of human civilisation, Auguste Comte, in 1854, added an Appendix in 229 pages, re-issuing six of his early essays on social philosophy. They were written at various times and for different periodicals in the ripe years from 1819 to 1828, the age of the author being from 21 to 30. The crucial importance and the special interest of them is this.

These essays prove that from youth till death Comte's scientific philosophy and his social polity were one coherent and consistent scheme. It was an organic scheme of thought and of life fully conceived from the first as having two correlated aspects—conviction and practice, sound knowledge leading up to right conduct, science and a good life. There could be no regeneration of society until the laws of human life had been mastered; and no learning was of any use unless its aim was human welfare.

The higher thought both here and abroad has now recognized the wide and growing impulse given by Comte to the philosophy of science. None have put that more strongly than John S. Mill, G. H. Lewes, John Morley in England, Gambetta, Renan, Littré, and many others in France and elsewhere in the Latin-speaking races. But most of those philosophers share Littré's plea

fixed to the *Polity*—*What is a great life?—A thought of youth fulfilled in the maturity of age.* The story of human ideas contains no more perfect example of the normal development of a concentrated and systematic mind

The distinctive feature of Positivism as an entire scheme of thought and life is this: it is the only known system of philosophy which is avowedly the basis of a new form of life · and it is the only known scheme of socialism or of religion which is avowedly based on a scientific philosophy This twin reciprocal interdependence of knowledge and of action is abundantly evident from these early Essays. The first point is decisively proved by the title of the third Essay of 1822—"A scheme of scientific labours indispensable for the regeneration of society." Comte even gave to this Essay (a work, in fact, of nearly 100 8vo pages) the title of "System of Positive Polity"—a title, as he admits, quite premature But this shows that at the age of twenty-four Comte regarded his scientific studies as the engine of a social reorganisation On the other hand, the fifth Essay of 1826—"Reflections on Spiritual Authority"—as decisively shows that even at the age of twenty-eight Comte's whole mind was set upon the idea of social, economic, political, and even international harmony and peace being maintained by means of a sound education in physical and moral science, to be taught and preached by an organised body of authoritative savants This dominant idea was developed in the *Polity* into that scheme of an organised body of teachers of moral and physical science which was parodied by Mill into a sacerdotal hierarchy with arbitrary powers

All the central doctrines of Positivism may be found in germ in these early Essays It was at

the age of nineteen that he published that characteristic maxim which runs through his whole work: *Everything is relative this is the only absolute principle* This luminous and pregnant dogma, as brilliant in form as it is creative in effect, forms a real epoch in modern philosophy It makes morality, polity, and religion at once practical, scientific, and human

The very key-note of Positivism is the distinctness and mutual relations of Temporal and Spiritual power—i e of Law, Government, Force on one side, and Ethic, Education, Persuasion on the other side This is the text of the Essay of 1819—Comte being just of age "It is the task of the people to call out for the ends they need: of expert politicians to devise new measures of statesmen to carry them out"

The law of social dynamics, that is, of the evolution of civilisation, is ultimately in the replacing of Theology by Science and the substitution of military institutions by industrial life and habits This is the subject of the Essay of 1820 (No 2) It is a brief *résumé* of the philosophy of history, ultimately worked out in Volume III of the *Positive Polity*

The Third Essay (of 1822) is far the longest and most important of the series It contains in the most exact and decisive form the famous *Law of the three States*, which all subsequent thinkers have regarded as Comte's triumphant discovery. It is, in fact, at once the basis and the justification of Positivism It is this. *From the nature of man's intellect each branch of knowledge in its development is necessarily obliged to pass through three stages—the Theological, i e the fictitious stage, the Metaphysical or transitional stage, and lastly the Scientific or Positive stage*

The same Essay contains also a clear statement

of the Classification of the Sciences in the decreasing order of their range of extension and of the increasing order of their complexity and interdependence. This magnificent conception has been accepted by subsequent philosophers in spite of the ignorant attempt of Herbert Spencer (who conformed to it in his own works) to dispute its value and its truth.

The Fourth and Fifth Essays (1825 and 1826) in effect give a *résumé* of the entire system of the *Positive Polity* as meaning a social and religious reorganisation of society based upon a scientific study of human nature and the moral law of life.

No student of these Essays can doubt that the *Positive Polity* of Comte is entirely consistent with the *Positive Philosophy*, of which it is the natural development Nor will he doubt that the entire social structure of the later work is as truly inspired by Science and founded on Science, as any part of the physical Philosophy

NOTE —The translation of these Essays, which appeared in Vol IV of the *Positive Polity* (Longmans & Co , 1877), pp. 493–653, has been revised by Paul Descours, H Gordon Jones, and S H Swinny They have added a few explanatory notes (in brackets, to distinguish them from Comte's). The Translator's side-notes, which also appear in the Table of Contents, have been in several cases recast by H Gordon Jones, who has added a large number of new ones to the present edition The same editor has seen this volume of Essays through the press

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This Appendix[1] fulfils the promise which I made, in 1851, when I commenced the *Positive Polity*, of reproducing all my early Essays on Social Philosophy Collected from periodicals long since forgotten, they may assist students disposed to follow my own course of philosophical development in their efforts to master Positivism But their publication is more especially intended to demonstrate the perfect harmony which exists between my youthful efforts and my matured conceptions

This complete continuity of thought is disguised by the exceptional magnitude of my task, and obscured by the analytical habits of our day, so unfavourable to any comprehensive judgment All but those who grasp the necessary connection between the philosophic basis and the religious superstructure must regard the two portions of my career as divergent The fact, therefore, that my second life simply realised the aim which I proposed to myself in early life requires to be made clear This the present Appendix is calculated to do, since it proves that, from the outset, I endeavoured to found that new Spiritual Power, of which I now lay the basis As the final result of my early Essays, I was led to perceive that the Social operation presupposed an Intellectual elaboration, since without this the doctrine required

[1] [The collected Essays first appeared as a General Appendix to the *System of Positive Polity* in 1854]

to terminate the Occidental anarchy could not be solidly built up For this reason I devoted the first half of my career to constructing, out of the materials supplied by the sciences, a truly Positive Philosophy, this being the only possible basis of a universal religion The theoretic foundation being thus laid, the residue of my life was with good reason devoted to that Social Aim, which at first I had imagined was accessible without any intellectual preparation

Besides the natural difficulty of comprehending so vast a scheme, antipathies also often interfere with a just perception of the intimate relation between my *System of Positive Polity* and my *System of Positive Philosophy* Notwithstanding the desire generally felt for the termination of the Occidental Revolution, active sympathies exist, especially among literary men, with that absence of discipline which is characteristic of our anarchic condition Individual pretensions are wounded by the institution of a Priesthood, bound by its office to insist on the observation of rules affecting public and even private life ; rules too which are inflexible since they always admit of verification Hence a disposition to regard my religious construction as being at variance with its philosophic basis, the intellectual attractions of which were unalloyed by any such drawback This Appendix, however, will demonstrate the inconsistency of all who, adopting the Positive Philosophy, reject those Social Applications which I announced from the outset Whether their attitude spring from incapacity to grasp my conceptions in their entirety, or from regret for the cessation of the religious interregnum, their speculative adhesion to the new synthesis renders it incumbent on them to admit its legitimate development The Political System, far from being opposed to my Philosophy,

is so completely its outcome, that the latter was created as the basis of the former, and of this the proof is supplied by the present Appendix

Keeping this object in view, those Essays alone are preserved which reveal my characteristic aspirations, all such being set aside as betray the unfortunate personal influence that overshadowed my earliest efforts From these artificial productions I only extract two unmistakable indications of my constant tendency towards the Positive Religion In 1817 a publication of mine, otherwise without value, contained the characteristic maxim. *Everything is relative, this is the only absolute principle.* A second indication of the same nature, as decisive but more fully expanded, is furnished in an Essay of the year 1818 where I treated the liberty of the press as a means of securing to all citizens a consultative influence Beyond these references I find nothing worthy of mention in my Essays composed before the six now collected for publication. I therefore disavow any other edition, and I have destroyed the unpublished materials.

The first Essay was written, in July 1819, for the *Censeur*—the only French periodical that posterity will deem noteworthy—but was never inserted I publish it here, partly as proving that, even at one and twenty, I was tending towards the Separation of the Two Powers, partly because the views presented are still useful

I now, as is just, reclaim possession of the second Essay, written in April 1820, the authorship of which, then known only to a few readers, was with my tacit consent abandoned to the editor[1] of the journal (the *Organisateur*) which inserted it. By giving its true title I mark it as the first outline

[1] [Saint-Simon.]

of my general conception of Modern History, distinguishing that double movement, positive and negative, the union of which characterises the revolution of Western Europe The historical contrast between France and England, according as central or local government prevailed, was there established with sufficient clearness and guided several writers, who profited by the conception, without indicating its source

The third Essay, published in May 1822, and containing the fundamental discovery of Sociological Laws, decisively indicated my philosophic and social tendencies Its appropriate title, as here given, sufficiently discloses the intimate combination of the scientific and political points of view, which had hitherto occupied my mind to an equal degree, though separately This decisive effort was first only published in one hundred copies gratuitously distributed as *proofs*. When reproducing it in 1824, with some additions of secondary importance, in an impression of one thousand copies, I thought it right to add to its special title that of " System of Positive Polity "—a title premature, indeed, but rightly indicating the scope of my labours The promise in my earliest years of that systematisation which the present treatise[1] could alone realise being thus evident, no one can ignore the unity of my career

Even the title of the fourth Essay, published in November 1825, manifests more clearly my tendency to establish a new Spiritual Authority in harmony with a Scientific Philosophy The demonstration of my two Fundamental Laws precedes the appreciation of the continuous advance of Humanity towards the reorganisation of the Theoretic Power

[1] [The *Positive Polity*, 1851–1854]

Finally, the publication of the fifth Essay, March 1826, in the same journal (the *Producteur*), decisively set forth the philosophic and social nature of the Division between the Spiritual and Temporal Powers.

My persevering aspiration to found a new Priesthood was thenceforward so manifest as to draw upon me opposing criticisms, the revolutionary school accusing me of theocratic tendencies, while the retrograde party hailed me as a defender of social order The widely different appreciation of the last-mentioned Essay by two writers of repute (Benjamin Constant and Lamennais) already revealed the normal attitude of the new party founded by me towards the old parties they represented When the eloquent defender of Catholicism, degenerating into a revolutionary declaimer, became blindly hostile to the Positive doctrine, this contrast could be verified in a single mind

Anyone comparing these five Essays, but especially the three last, will perceive a constant progression, the last term of which reveals the general object of the whole—the reorganisation of the Spiritual Power by renovating Philosophy I thus prepared the way for my Fundamental Treatise, the oral elaboration of which began in 1826, although the first volume was not published until July 1830. In laying this philosophical foundation, terminated in 1842, I always had in view, more and more, the religious construction which its social destination, as originally designed, demanded.

The sixth and concluding Essay, published by the *Journal de Paris* in August 1828, manifests the transition from my social début to my intellectual career, which began, the following year, with the completion of the course of lectures commenced in

1826,[1] but soon after suspended by my cerebral attack The insight gained through my personal experience was utilised in this review of the memorable work in which Broussais worthily combated the metaphysical influence This concluding Essay will ever possess an historical interest, since it roused this great biologist to the noble work which shed a lustre on the close of his fine career I refer to his just appreciation of the admirable effort of Gall, which he had formerly under-estimated

[The word *Physiology* which occurs in this syllabus of lectures was used by Comte to denote the science now called *Biology* The latter word was employed by Comte in Vol III of the *Philosophie Positive* (1838), and in all his later works Whenever, therefore, the word *physiology* is used in the following Essays, it must be considered equivalent to the term *biology* —H G J]

[1] I deem it right to preserve the memory of this first effort by reproducing the short programme circulated in a manuscript form at the beginning of 1826

COURSE OF POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY IN 72 LECTURES

From the 1st of April, 1826, *to the 1st of April*, 1827

GENERAL PRELIMINARIES 2 lectures		i Exposition of the object of the course. ii. Exposition of the plan of the course
MATHEMATICS .	16 lectures	Calculus, 7 Geometry, 5 Mechanics, 4
INORGANIC SCIENCE—		
ASTRONOMY	10 ,,	Geometrical, 5, Mechanical, 5
PHYSICS	10 ,,	
CHEMISTRY	10 ,,	
ORGANIC SCIENCE—		
PHYSIOLOGY	10 ,,	
SOCIAL PHYSICS	14 ,,	

FIRST ESSAY

(*July* 1819)

SEPARATION OF OPINIONS FROM ASPIRATIONS

Need for true political science

RULERS would gladly have it taken for granted that they alone can see aright in Politics, and consequently are entitled to a monopoly of opinion on such matters. They have doubtless their own reasons for speaking in this way, while subjects have theirs for refusing assent to a principle which, from every point of view, is wholly absurd For, on the contrary, rulers, even when honest, are by their position more disqualified from gaining a just and elevated view of general Politics ; since a continual preoccupation with details incapacitates for correct theory Should a publicist wish to form large political conceptions, let him rigorously refrain from political office. How can he be both actor and spectator ?

But on this question men have run from one excess into another. Opponents of the absurd pretension of rulers to exclusive political wisdom have fostered among subjects the prejudice, less dangerous but equally absurd, that everyone is competent to form, by mere instinct, just views in Politics ; thus encouraging each citizen to set himself up as a legislator. It is remarkable, as observed by Condorcet, that men deem it ridiculous to affect a knowledge of physics or astronomy, etc , without having studied these sciences ; yet believe that anyone can understand political science and

possess a firm and decided opinion on its most abstract principles without any necessity for reflection or special study.

This arises, as Condorcet might have added, from Politics not having yet become a positive science, for, evidently, when it has become such, everyone will understand that the study of the observations and deductions which form its basis is indispensable for its comprehension

Difference between Opinions and Aspirations

However, in order to reconcile all, and exclude this prejudice without sanctioning the principle of political indifferentism so dear to rulers, it might be well to distinguish, more than is usually done, between Opinions and Aspirations It is reasonable, natural, and necessary that every citizen should have political aspirations, since all have an interest in the conduct of social affairs It is evident, for example, that all citizens who do not belong to the privileged class, and live by the fruit of their labour, must desire liberty, peace, industrial prosperity, economy in public expenditure, and a just employment of the revenue But a political opinion expresses more than desires It includes a judgment, for the most part decided and absolute, that these can only be satisfied by particular measures and by no others Now, on this head it is ridiculous and unreasonable to pronounce without special study The question arises: is such a measure or institution fitted to effect a given end? Evidently the reply involves a series of reflections that call for a particular examination, failing which the end proposed may be deemed attainable by means capable of producing an exactly opposite effect Thus many people, who sincerely desire liberty and peace, have, nevertheless, notions as to the means of securing these blessings so erroneous that, if put

in practice, they must lead to disorder and arbitrary power.

Political consequences of separating Opinions from Aspirations

Two important consequences in Politics follow, as I believe, from this separation of Opinions and Aspirations

Firstly, taking the view above suggested, and regarding unenlightened men as confounding in their political estimates the end and the means, it will be seen that a greater uniformity exists than is commonly imagined in the political aspirations of a nation In France, for example, among those who profess retrograde opinions, there are a few only, belonging to the old privileged classes, who from conviction truly desire the re-establishment of ancient institutions The majority at bottom, with the rest of the world, wish for liberty, peace, and economy The association of this desire with the idea of the feudal regime arises simply from their regarding it as the only means adapted to secure the above ends

In the second place, the above separation determines, as it appears to me, the share in the Government which rightly belongs to the mass of the people The public alone should indicate the end , because though it may not always know what is really wanted, it perfectly understands its own wishes, and no one else is entitled to dictate these

The functions of People, Publicists, and Rulers

When, however, Public Opinion has once clearly indicated the end, the consideration of the measures for effecting it exclusively belongs to scientific politicians It would be absurd for the masses to reason about them The business of the People is to form aspirations , that of Publicists to propose measures , that of Rulers to realise them The failure to distinguish these

three functions must in a greater or less degree cause confusion

In a word, when Politics shall have taken the rank of a positive science, the People should and must accord to Publicists the same confidence in their department, which it now concedes to astronomers in astronomy, to physicians in medicine, etc , with this difference, however, that the public will be exclusively entitled to point out the end and aim of the work

Such confidence, attended, as it has been, with most serious disadvantages, while Politics have remained vague, mysterious, devoid of principle, in a word, theological, will, so soon as they have been transformed into a positive science, be accompanied by no greater evil than the confidence which we daily and fearlessly accord to the physician, even in matters of life and death

When this transformation has been effected, the submission due to reason will be perfectly reconciled with the precautions needful against arbitrary power

SECOND ESSAY

(*April* 1820)

A BRIEF ESTIMATE OF MODERN HISTORY

The Catholic-Feudal System

THE advance of Civilisation calls on us to replace a system which was due to the combination of two Powers—Spiritual and Temporal; the first being Papal and Theological, the second Feudal and Military.

As regards the Spiritual element, the birth of this system may be traced from the growing preponderance of Christianity in Europe, towards the third or fourth century. The origin of the Temporal Power is referable to nearly the same epoch, being that of the first great efforts of the Northern populations to establish themselves in the South of Europe, and the consequent dismemberment of the Roman Empire

These two Powers were definitely constituted during the eleventh and twelfth centuries At this period Feudalism, on the one hand, was universally established on a settled basis as a National power; on the other, Catholicism was completely organised as a European power

Let us pause for a moment to make two important observations on this remarkable epoch

In the first place, this twofold organisation established itself in a short time and without much difficulty, because it had been gradually prepared during the seven or eight centuries that followed the birth of the two Powers

The establishment of the Temporal Power re-

sulted from the overthrow of the Roman Empire by the Northern populations Its consolidation, however, was unavoidably deferred until the termination of the irruptions by the victories of the earliest invading settlers over the later invaders Such was the object of the wars of Charlemagne against the Saxons and Saracens, and afterwards of the Crusades

The rise of the Spiritual Power had been prepared by the overthrow of Polytheism and the establishment of the Christian religion, whose numerous clergy had spread themselves over Europe

When the Pope, Hildebrand, in the eleventh century openly proclaimed the supremacy of the Papacy as a European power over the National powers, he merely asserted a principle the foundations of which were already established, or, in other terms, embodied a faith of which the elements had long been accepted

In the second place, it is worthy of remark that the two Powers coincided, both in the period of their rise and in that of their consolidation Their decline also manifests the same analogy This constant correspondence of the two Powers tends to prove—and that apart from the arguments which demonstrate their mutual dependence—that they must disappear simultaneously, that the Temporal Power cannot be replaced by a power of a different nature without an analogous transformation in the Spiritual Power, and vice versa

This social system had taken its rise during the preceding one, and even at the period when the earlier system had attained its complete development In like manner, when the Catholic-Feudal system culminated, the germ of its destruction commenced, as well as the elements of the system destined in our day to replace it

In truth, as regards the Temporal Power, the Emancipation of the Commons [1] dates from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. As regards the Spiritual Power, the Positive Sciences were introduced into Europe by the Arabs about the same time

Let us fix our attention on this fundamental fact, since it forms the real starting-point for the series of observations by which we now endeavour to throw light upon the existing political system.

The Feudal or Military Power must be replaced by the Industrial Capacity.[2]

[1] [The French word *communes*, here translated Commons, meant originally the burghers or free community of a chartered town When, therefore, Comte speaks of the emancipation of the *communes* as dating from the eleventh century, he refers to the enfranchisement of the serfs in the towns which, organised as chartered municipalities, had thenceforward a recognised place in public life alongside of, though at first much inferior to, that of the King, the Clergy, and the Nobility. The burghers thus became the leaders and representatives of all who were outside the old privileged classes. The distinction in France between nobles and burghers did not exactly correspond to that between Lords and Commons in England, for the Commons contained Knights of the Shire as well as Burgesses from the towns In France, as time went on, the special privileges of the towns lost their political value, while the personal freedom of the burghers was shared by the whole population Hence the division was no longer between the old powers and the towns, but between the old privileged classes and the People. When Comte speaks of the Commons as composed of men of science, artists, and artisans, he enumerates these as the typical elements of the New Order that was beginning to develop —S. H S]

[2] [Comte uses the word *capacité*—here translated "capacity"—to distinguish the authority which men of science and leaders of industry are coming to

Industry must replace War

So long as War was, in fact, and rightly, considered as the chief source of the prosperity of nations, it was natural that the direction of the temporal affairs of society should be in the hands of a military power and that Industry, occupying a subaltern position, should be only used as an instrument On the contrary, when experience has at last convinced society that the only road to wealth lies through peaceful activity, or works of industry, the direction of affairs properly passes to the Industrial Capacity Henceforward, military force, in its turn, can only occupy a subordinate position, as a merely passive force, and one in all probability destined to become finally useless

Now, the Emancipation of the Commons laid the foundation for this new state of things , facilitating and even necessitating a change which, as will presently be shown, ever after developed itself with increasing force This emancipation established the Industrial Capacity as a social organisation distinct from the Military Power , thus conferring on it an independent existence

Before this epoch not only were the artisans as a body absolutely dependent on the military class , but each of them was entirely at the mercy of the individual caprice of his territorial lord.

The Emancipation of the Commons while leav-

exercise more and more under the new social system from the power (*pouvoir*) which the spiritual and temporal chiefs exercised under the old system in virtue of the absolute faith reposed in the former and the force at the command of the latter. Under the old system this authority was due to the position and power of the leaders , under the new, it is due to their capability and fitness—their "capacity" to fulfil the duties and supply the needs of the new social system by their scientific knowledge and industrial ability —S H S

ing in force the first or collective kind of subjection, abolished the second or individual, and in so doing prepared the way for the destruction of the former Up to that time the artisans possessed nothing as their own All they possessed, and even their persons, belonged to their lord, and they enjoyed only what he thought proper to relinquish Their emancipation created an industrial property, springing from labour, a kind of property distinct from, independent of, and soon rivalling territorial property, which in its origin and constitution was purely military

Thanks to this memorable innovation the Industrial Capacity was enabled to develop, perfect, and extend itself, and nations could then organise themselves completely on a basis of Industry. The ruling powers alone, together with the general government of which these continued in possession, maintained a military character

Let us next make observations in reference to the Spiritual Power, analogous to those which we have just made on the Temporal Power.

Science must replace Theology

The Spiritual Power must, in like manner, be replaced by the Scientific or Positive Capacity

At the period when all branches of knowledge were essentially conjectural and metaphysical the direction of society in spiritual matters naturally fell into the hands of a theological power, since theologians were then the only general thinkers But as soon as the entire range of knowledge became based upon observation, the direction of spiritual affairs would rightly be confided to the Scientific or Positive Capacity, since this is evidently superior to Theology or Metaphysics.

Now, the introduction of the Positive Sciences into Europe by the Arabs created the germ of this

important revolution which in our day has embraced all special branches of thought and even reached our general conceptions so far as regards their critical or negative aspect

No sooner had the Arabs founded, in the portions of Europe conquered by them, schools for teaching the sciences of observation, than a general enthusiasm for this new enlightenment animated all distinguished minds. Schools of a like nature soon arose throughout Western Europe, observatories, schools of dissection, museums of natural history were established in Italy, France, England, and Germany From the thirteenth century, Roger Bacon cultivated the physical sciences with distinguished success. The superiority of the positive over the conjectural, of Physics over Metaphysics, was so strongly felt from the outset, even by the spiritual power, that several eminent members of the clergy, and among others two popes, went, about the same time, to complete their education at Cordova by studying at that school sciences of observation under Arabian professors.

Decline of the Mediæval and growth of the Modern social system

Resuming then the preceding observations, we may take it as certain that at the moment when the Catholic-Feudal system assumed its definite organisation, the elements of a new social system took their rise A positive temporal capacity, that is to say, the Industrial Capacity, sprang up beside the existing Military Power, then come to full maturity, and a positive spiritual capacity, that is to say, the Scientific Capacity, arose behind the Spiritual Power, at the moment when this began to develop its full activity.[1]

[1] The social distinction between the Spiritual and Temporal Powers must subsist in the New as in the Old System This division, which had no existence among the Romans, is the most fundamental improve-

Before commencing our examination of the special facts, let us observe a remarkable difference between the Old and New Systems which shows itself from the very birth of the latter. This difference I have endeavoured to render by contrasting the words Power and Capacity. I do not say: a new power arises beside each of the two ancient powers, but: a *capacity* arises beside a *power*. In other words the action of principles then took its rise, and in our day substitutes itself for the action of men, Reason taking the place of Will.

The military character of the Old System naturally demanded in the highest degree passive obedience from the nation On the contrary, the Industrial Capacity, regarded as the rightful guide of the temporal affairs of society, is not and should not be associated with arbitrary power, since the plans which it may propose for advancing the public good on the one hand can be judged, and, on the other hand, can be executed without resorting to coercion.

The Spiritual Power, in like manner, being in its very essence conjectural, necessarily exacted the highest degree of confidence and mental submission Such submission was an indispensable condition of its existence and action. On the contrary, the positive Scientific Capacity, in directing the spiritual affairs of society, requires no blind faith, nor even confidence, at least on the part of all who can comprehend demonstrations, while as regards those who cannot, experience has suffi-

ment which the Moderns have introduced into the organisation of society. By this alone, as permitting the separation of theory and practice, it became possible to make politics a science There is, however, this difference, that in the New System the separation is no longer between two Powers but between two Capacities.

ciently proved that reliance placed in the unanimous conclusions of men of science, not being liable to abuse, cannot be prejudicial

The positive Scientific Capacity may, therefore, in so far as it is a creative force, be considered as the source of power, but of a power which replaces Revelation by Demonstration

Such, then, is our starting-point In the eleventh century the Temporal and Spiritual Powers attained their definite constitution, and at the same epoch two Positive Capacities took their rise, preparing the overthrow of the powers which they were finally destined to replace In a word, one system culminated, another was born Since that period the two systems have always coexisted in a state of mutual antagonism, at one time secret, at another open, the first, however, always losing ground while the second continually advanced

An investigation of the past is, therefore, divisible into two parallel series, which respectively embrace the decline of the Old System and the growth of the New one This division will form the basis of this Essay

FIRST SERIES

DECLINE OF THE OLD SYSTEM

First open struggle between the Old and New society in the sixteenth century

AT the period above selected for the commencement of this investigation, the two systems—one at its maturity, the other just springing into life—were so unequal in force that for a long time no direct and apparent struggle could arise between them Accordingly history shows

that the open conflict only dates from the sixteenth century. The four or five centuries immediately preceding formed the period of greatest splendour of the Catholic-Feudal system, but this splendour rested on a foundation already undermined.

Had historians more deeply analysed and examined the Middle Age, they would not have confined their expositions to the obvious features of that period They would have pointed out the gradual preparation of the great events afterwards developed, and would not have represented the sixteenth century as a series of sudden and unforeseen explosions However this may be, unquestionably, the open struggle between the two systems only dates from that century

Decline of Catholicism

The Spiritual Power was essentially characterised by its exercising a European function, and was consequently in reality subverted by the attack of Luther and his co-reformers on the Papal authority. This also completely sapped the surviving influence of theological authority by destroying the principle of blind faith, and substituting for it that of the right of free inquiry, which, at first confined within narrow limits, was inevitably destined to expand continually and embrace, at last, an indefinite field

This twofold change was accomplished as completely in countries that remained Catholic, especially in France, as in those which embraced Protestantism

The two cases however, presented one essential difference In Catholic countries, the Spiritual Power, feeling its downfall as a distinct and independent body, subordinated itself, generally speaking, to the Royal Authority, devoting to its service and support the same doctrines by which the

church had formerly predominated over the monarchy

This change in the rôle of the clergy had the effect of prolonging its political influence somewhat beyond its natural duration, but it damaged the cause of Royalty by associating its fortunes more closely with those of doctrines which had lost all credit among the educated classes.

The assault on the Temporal Power in France and England

The religious Reformation, by reason of the wars it occasioned, occupied the whole of the sixteenth and the first part of the seventeenth centuries. Immediately after this movement, the assaults began upon the Temporal Power in France and England

In each of these countries the Commons, guided by one of the two branches of the Temporal Power, led the attack. Between the two nations but one difference existed on this head With the English, Feudalism became the ally of the Commons against the Royal Authority, while in France they were headed by Royalty against Feudalism

This combination of the Commons with one element of the Temporal Power against the other element had originated in both countries after their emancipation, and had even contributed not a little to produce it Long before the seventeenth century the alliance had produced unmistakeable results which prepared the important events of that century

In France Cardinal Richelieu worked openly for the overthrow of Feudalism, an enterprise terminated by Louis XIV, who reduced the nobility to entire insignificance and political nullity, leaving them no other office than that of guard of honour to Royalty. It is essential to observe that both Richelieu and Louis XIV powerfully encouraged the fine arts, the sciences, and the industrial arts,

they endeavoured to enhance the political importance of men of science, artists, and artisans, while lowering that of the nobles This policy was most clearly manifested by the minister Colbert, himself of artisan origin But this fact belongs to our Second Series of observations and it suffices to note it here.

In England the issue of the struggle was the revolution of 1688, which limited the Royal Power as far as could be done without subverting the Old System. Thus in each of these two countries the attack on the Temporal Power, in distinct ways, weakened, as far as was possible, a different element of this power, so that the two nations had effected the overthrow of the Temporal Power up to the point where further change became impracticable without abandoning the Old social system. To effectuate this final result, it was sufficient that each nation should adopt the modification made by the other. This has recently occurred in France, since the French adopted the English Constitution

Influence of the Commons

The coalition between the Commons and one element of the Temporal Power against the other element, and the active assistance which in several countries was accorded by the Temporal against the Spiritual Power, renders it impossible, without a thorough investigation, to seize the true nature of these attacks

Hence has sprung a widespread error which it is important to point out and refute In place of seeing in these events the struggle of the Commons headed by certain elements of the Catholic-Feudal system against its other elements, historians have only seen a quarrel of kings and popes and of the royal and feudal authorities between themselves. The Commons have been merely regarded as in-

struments employed by the different powers and seldom in any other light

Before proceeding to rectify the error just mentioned, it may be well to observe that, whatever view be taken, our present Series will remain unaffected, since its main object is to prove the continuous decline of the Old System Nevertheless, it is very far from being a matter of indifference, whether we form a just or an erroneous conception of the extent to which this decline was wrought by the influence of the Artisans, Artists, and Thinkers who collectively constituted the Commons

It may be laid down as a principle that any discordance of elements constituting a system is an evident sign of its decay Thus from the first great act of antagonism between the Temporal and Spiritual Powers, the fall of both, sooner or later, might have been predicted

Antagonism of this sort showed itself at a very early period in the Old System, even anterior to its complete organisation , but became continuous almost immediately after its definitive establishment Reflection shows that it was inherent in this system

Powers are of necessity rivals and jealous of each other, even when their common interest manifestly dictates an intimate alliance These powers being, in fact, incapable of a clear definition, it is natural that each should aspire to exclusive dominion A true and enduring combination can only exist between positive Capacities Combination then becomes possible, and, so to speak, inevitable, since each of these Capacities naturally confines itself to its proper office, which is defined as sharply as possible Pretensions to universal influence, which alone could disturb this natural arrangement, strike all men as absurd, and,

consequently, could never muster a sufficient number of followers to make them dangerous

The Commons attach themselves to the most liberal Power

The Commons being at their birth manifestly too feeble to struggle alone against the Old System, were forced to attach themselves to the heads of the enemy's camp They endeavoured to profit by the divisions that arose within it, and such was their prudence, they did in fact always profit by them Their plan was very simple, and consisted in always supporting that Power which at each period and in each country was most liberal, that is, most in harmony with their interests This plan they followed persistently, with an admirable instinct, in all the partial crises which preceded the two great struggles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Thus their conduct in these later periods was by no means accidental, but resulted from long-established habits

Now, this explains why in England the Commons sided with the Lords against the King, while in France they took part with Royalty against Feudalism. At more remote periods the Commons, both in France and England, had embraced the cause of the Spiritual Power because this was then the most liberal In reality, therefore, the Commons were not the mere instruments of the old Powers, on the contrary, the latter, although moved by impulses peculiar to themselves, should rather be regarded as having been instruments of the former. In fact, the attack upon the Old System took place both through and for the Commons They were not dupes, if any such there were, in the transaction.

Part played by Science and Industry

Moreover, the Commons, in the struggles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, exercised a direct

action peculiar to themselves. Each of the two elements of the New System, the Industrial capacity and the Scientific capacity, contributed to the result. Although these always acted concurrently, nevertheless, as was natural, the latter principally concerned itself with the Spiritual power as the former did with the Temporal power. Each Capacity fought hand to hand with the corresponding Power and, as is worthy of remark, the Scientific Capacity, while endeavouring to overthrow the theological doctrines, felt itself obliged to take its stand upon theology, or, at least, to accommodate its arguments to the theological method. This is mainly observable in the writings of Francis Bacon. This fact in the spiritual struggle corresponds to the alliance of the Commons with one of the elements of the military power in the temporal conflict.

Discovery of America, Invention of Printing, and Copernican Astronomy

It is not necessary to demonstrate the marked influence exercised by the Sciences of Observation upon the Reformation of Luther, since no one in the present day questions it. The best historians of this period have indicated the influence which, though less direct and decided, was exercised upon this reform by the progress of the Useful Arts, pointing out the great impulse given to commerce and manufactures by the discovery of America and the passage to the Indies round the Cape of Good Hope, which indeed itself resulted from the progress of the Useful Arts combined with the Sciences of Observation.

Two other discoveries of the first rank, made, one in the Arts towards the end of the fifteenth century, the other in the Sciences about a century later, confirmed and hastened the decline of the Old System, and secured for the New an advance

more direct and certain, more calm and more rapid.

Of these discoveries the first was that of Printing, which, if it did not cause the Reformation, at least rendered its spread much more rapid and complete than it otherwise would have been But this did not form its main influence in the overthrow of the Old System.

The considerations are well known that prove the immense revolution which this discovery effected in social order, by rendering Public Opinion supreme Passing these over, we shall present the subject in another aspect

We say, therefore: first, that the discovery of Printing secured to the New System the means of taking a direct and complete initiative in replacing the Old System independently of any protection from its declining elements; secondly, that it assuaged, in a large measure, the antecedent violence of the struggle, by substituting criticism for attack

The second of these discoveries is that of the true Astronomical Theory suggested by Copernicus, proved and established by Galileo.

Even the best minds rarely estimate at its true value, the vast influence which the change of ideas thus wrought exerted in the radical destruction of the Theological System. So great was this influence that it alone would have sufficed to demolish that system. The following consideration, which my readers can develop, will suffice to show this.

The entire Theological System is based upon the supposition that the Earth is made for Man and the whole Universe made for the Earth; remove this supposition and the basis of all supernatural doctrines gives way. Now, Galileo having demonstrated that our planet is one of the

smallest, is in no respect distinguished from the others, and revolves with them about the sun, the hypothesis that Nature is made for man and alone so manifestly shocks good sense and contradicts fact, that it must appear absurd and collapse, and with it must fall the edifice of faith In a word, the theological doctrines are entirely incompatible with the truths of modern astronomy and are so felt even by those whose astronomical belief does not rest on demonstration

This consideration, when sufficiently weighed, must satisfy us that the Inquisition, in endeavouring to suppress at the outset the theory of Galileo, was faithful to its office as the police of the Spiritual Power

Summary of preceding considerations

To sum up our previous remarks, it appears that by the end of the seventeenth century two attacks had been made on the Old System, one in the sixteenth century on the Spiritual power, the other in the seventeenth century on the Temporal power.

At first sight this twofold attack might seem sufficient, but such was far from being the case The system had been attacked in its elements, but not as a whole, beaten in detail, it still needed to be beaten as a system Besides, each special struggle had been directed by a branch of the old powers and thus was not sufficiently decisive The victory of the New over the Old System had not been made sufficiently clear, and this was an additional reason which necessitated a further struggle

Anyone, therefore, living at the end of the seventeenth century, and well acquainted with the real state of affairs, might have predicted with perfect confidence that the two antecedent but partial attacks were merely preparatory, and

would in the succeeding century be followed by an attack directed against the Old System as a whole, and destined to effect its final destruction Such events were the inevitable consequence of the whole past since the eleventh century, but more immediately of the last two centuries.

The eighteenth century Ruin of the Old System

It would be superfluous to consider in detail facts so near to our own time and known to all The eighteenth century was really, as might be expected, the result, the complement, and the résumé of the two preceding centuries.

In reference to the Spiritual Power the principle of the Right of Private Judgment in religion (laid down by Luther, though at first very timidly) was then pushed to its furthest limits. The boldest applications of this right advanced side by side with the efforts made to vindicate its supremacy. The theological creeds thus submitted to discussion were entirely overthrown, no doubt somewhat recklessly, precipitately, and superficially, with an exaggerated disregard of the past and an inadequate insight into the future, but they were irremediably overthrown, since criticism covered them with ridicule even among the least instructed classes. This is an undeniable fact, and we make the observation without discussing the merits of the criticism

If we examine what were the destinies of the Temporal Power in France, where the eighteenth century should be principally studied, we shall find that Feudalism, having in the preceding century lost all political power, forfeited in this all social consideration

Royalty, after having, under Louis XIV, obtained complete dominion over the Temporal Power by the support which the Commons lent

to it, ceased to ally itself with them; a serious mistake on its part

Louis XIV. committed a great error in allying himself with the nobility, which—oblivious of its having once held an equal rank with the monarch—at last resigned itself to accept, in exchange for money and honours, a subordinate and insignificant political rôle

Had not Louis XIV. committed this great error, had he abandoned to its fate a declining power irrevocably doomed, and whose destruction was hastened by himself, had he, in fine, simply continued to follow the direction taken by the Commons, he would, without doubt, have saved all the misfortunes which afterwards fell on Louis XVI.

This false step it was which originally discredited Royalty in the eyes of the Commons and alienated them from it. The discredit thrown on the royal power by the private life of the Regent and the libertinism of Louis XV., put the finishing stroke to this declension. At the same time, the philosophers having subjected the Temporal, as they had the Spiritual, Power to discussion, it also succumbed the more easily because it was, since the Reformation, in great part founded on the same doctrines.

Thus the eighteenth century carried the criticism of the two Powers to its last limits, and completed the ruin of the Old System, both in its elements and as a whole A more detailed examination of the process by which its overthrow was effected would here be out of place

Destructive influence of Modern Science on Theology

I shall merely indicate the influence which the immense and ever increasing progress of the Sciences of Observation from the time of Galileo inevitably exercised for the destruction

of theological doctrines. Newton's discovery of a general physical law, Franklin's analysis of the principal meteorological phenomenon, besides his invention for subordinating it to human power;[1] in a word, all the numerous and remarkable discoveries made during this century in Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry and Physiology[2] contributed to the radical and irrevocable destruction of the theological system, more efficaciously than all the writings of Voltaire and his coadjutors, although these really exercised a prodigious influence. Neither the partisans nor the adversaries of the Old System have adequately appreciated this fact.

The French Revolution

Thus prepared or, to speak more truly, necessitated, the French Revolution burst forth. From the outset it took a wrong direction. The Royal Power was overthrown, but speedily raised itself again. Forming as this did both head and heart of the Old System, the one could only disappear with the other; and no system can disappear until a fresh one has come into being and is ready to replace its predecessor.

From this great movement resulted the abolition of privileges, the proclamation of the principle of unlimited liberty of conscience, and, finally, the establishment of the English constitution, granted by the crown.

The abolition of privileges completed the ruin of Feudalism, reducing the Temporal Power to the single element of Royalty.

Unlimited liberty of conscience once proclaimed

[1] [Franklin's discovery of the identity of lightning with electricity and his invention of the lightning-rod or conductor.]

[2] [Physiology, i.e. Biology. See note at end of Author's Preface.]

as a principle,[1] the Spiritual Power was wholly and irrevocably abolished.

The establishment of the English constitution[2] should be viewed under two aspects, differing from each other and in some degree opposed

On the one hand, it continued the work of demolition, by limiting the Royal Power, now the only surviving part of the Old System, as far as could be done without abandoning the latter.

On the other hand, by establishing a Chamber intended to represent Public Opinion, this innovation provided the means of transition, through which it became possible, peaceably, easily, and promptly, to initiate the normal system so soon as this was prepared and ready to take its place

Summary of the First Series.

Having thus terminated the First Series of observations, I shall briefly sum up the results of my examination.

[1] Its proclamation rendered impossible the establishment of any theological authority, either political, or simply moral Doctrines having been abandoned to the good pleasure of each individual, perhaps no two professions of faith would have been identical, and that of each person might vary from morning to evening, altering with the ever varying state of his physical and moral sensibilities, and the changes in his social circumstances

In a word, it is evident that, as regards their political consequences, unlimited liberty of conscience and entire theological indifference come to exactly the same thing In neither case can supernatural beliefs serve as the basis of morals Far from concealing this fact we cannot repeat it too often, since it proves the necessity for reconstructing and building on positive principles (that is to say, principles deduced from observation) that morality which is the basis, or rather the general bond, of the social organisation

[2] [The establishment in France of a constitution somewhat similar to that of England, a Limited Monarchy with two Chambers, at the Restoration in 1814]

I set out from this position:

In the eleventh century the Catholic-Feudal System had acquired its definite constitution both as to the Spiritual and the Temporal Powers.

From the same epoch dates the rise of the elements of the New Social System. These were, firstly, the Industrial Capacity sprung from the enfranchisement of the Commons and represented by the artisans, secondly, the Scientific Capacity which took its rise with the introduction of the sciences of observation into Europe by the Arabs.

For four or five hundred years these two Systems coexisted without any open conflict, their forces being so unequal, but during this period the struggle was silently prepared.

From the commencement of the sixteenth century, three grand conflicts arose between the New and Old Systems. Two of them were partial, one was general, and each occupied about one century.

The sixteenth century witnessed the attack on the Spiritual, the seventeenth that on the Temporal, power, while the general and decisive attack on the Old System took place during the eighteenth, determining the fall of the Theologico-Military System

The true condition of the Old System may without exaggeration be thus described

On the one hand, dogmatic faith no longer exists, all the beliefs which lay at its root being extinct, or nearly so Thus the Spiritual Power can now only exert an influence upon the most backward elements of society.

On the other hand, the Temporal Power stands reduced to one only of its two branches—Royalty. This is itself reduced to the smallest dimensions consistent with the bare existence, in an inert state, of the Old System.

In fine, the Old System in our day no longer

possesses any force but such as is rigorously required for the maintenance of Order until the establishment of the New one;' and its continued efficacy for this purpose would be very doubtful were the advent of the latter too long postponed.

In conformity with this exposition I leave others to judge whether the organisation of the New System is urgent; and whether artists, scientific men, and artisans do not gravely err when they are indifferent on this head

Such is the true state of society at this moment with reference to the Old System. The Second Series of observations will soon show us how far our social state is more satisfactory in relation to the New System.'

SECOND SERIES

GROWTH OF THE NEW SYSTEM

Rise of Modern Industry and Science

IF in the preceding Series the march of Civilisation has appeared stormy, in that on which we now enter we shall find it calm. Hitherto we have only considered the successive steps in the disorganisation of the Old System of society. But contemporaneously with this decline, a New Social Order was completely, though gradually, created This in our day has become sufficiently developed to replace the Old and already decrepit Order It remains to study and explain the gradual development of the New System

Let us once more retrace our steps

We have seen that in the eleventh century, at the very moment when the Old System culminated, the elements of a new social organisation had sprung up. These elements were, as regarded

the Temporal Power, the Industrial Capacity born from the enfranchisement of the Commons, as regarded the Spiritual, the Scientific Capacity resulting from the introduction of the positive sciences into Europe by the Arabs.

If at this epoch some man of genius could have looked with sufficient insight into the condition of affairs then existing, he must infallibly have foreseen, from its very beginning, the whole of the great revolution since accomplished, he must have become aware that the two elements just created would inevitably tend to overthrow the two powers whose combination constituted the system then in vigour.

He must likewise have foreseen that these new elements would expand, more and more, at the expense of the two powers, so as, little by little, to found a system finally destined to replace the old one

Applying ourselves to verify this fundamental view, we shall find that the Second Series is implicitly contained in its earliest germs We shall next examine the manner in which the New System was effectively organised

Reasons why the New System destroyed and replaced the Old one

The twofold and inherent tendency of the New System—to destroy the Old System and to replace it—was the immediate result of the two following causes.

In the first place, from the very nature of things, the Industrial capacity and the Scientific capacity are antagonistic, one to the Military, the other to the Theological, power.

In the second place, the source of these two Capacities placed them outside the Old System, since they were represented by classes distinct from, and independent of, the Temporal and Spiritual Powers.

This latter feature, while it assured the future of both Capacities and their complete development, impressed upon them an indelible character of opposition to, and incompatibility with, the Old System

Up to the present time so little attention has been paid to this essential view that it becomes necessary to develop it at some length.

In the social state which still subsists in Russia, where all industrial undertakings are directed, in the last resort, by the feudal class, the Industrial Capacity does not present itself in natural opposition to the military power, or as properly belonging to a distinct state of society It has not yet assumed its characteristic attitude. The artisans are only passive instruments in the hands of the military rulers So also with the Scientific Capacity, so long as the sciences are cultivated by the theological powers alone, as was the case in the early periods of Civilisation, in the ancient theocracies of the East, and still is so in China [1] The Scientific Capacity is then merely an instrument of government in the hands of the priesthood

Such in fact was the state of affairs in Europe down to the memorable period which we have selected as our starting-point

Before the Enfranchisement of the Commons, the small amount of agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial enterprise which then existed, if not directed by the temporal chiefs, was, at least, dependent upon them

So likewise, before the introduction of the Positive Sciences into Europe by the Arabs, the small subsisting aggregate of knowledge was entirely in the hands of the Spiritual Power.

[1] [Comte had not at this time made a special study of Chinese Civilisation When he did so, he recognised that China, though conservative, was not theocratic.]

It is worthy of remark that this state of things, while it lasted, secured the perpetuation of the Old System, not merely because the main-springs of the New one were completely at the mercy of the two Old Powers, but also because, for this very reason, the development of the two Capacities was completely arrested

When the Sciences and Arts are regarded simply as instruments, they can never rise above a certain, and that a very low, point, as may be seen in China and India.

On the contrary, as soon as the Commons were enfranchised, and the positive sciences exclusively cultivated by laymen, which happened shortly after their introduction into Europe, the face of things was entirely changed

These two great events first permitted the Arts and Sciences to expand freely, no other limit being thenceforward imposed on the progress of the two positive Capacities but that of the duration of the human race.

In the second place, from this date, the Industrial capacity and the Scientific capacity, disengaged for ever from the Old System, established themselves in a solid manner outside of it, thus acquiring a separate and characteristic existence. But it was impossible they should cease to be instruments of the Old System without becoming its enemies: as the proverb says, *Qui non est mecum, contra me est* [1]

This fundamental revolution, therefore, created two new social forces, the Industrial force and the Scientific force. These from their birth, and owing to their origin, were externally impressed with a twofold character, being at once antagonists of the Old political order and elements of a New order.

[1] ["He that is not with Me is against Me" S. Luke xi 23]

The contempt and hatred which from that time forward Feudalism and Theology persistently manifested, the one towards the Industrial Arts, the other towards the Sciences of Observation, only strengthened this antagonism and rendered it more decided

Thus the change wrought during the eleventh century contained, in principle, at once the destruction of the Old System and the creation of a New order of things

Since this epoch, history has been nothing but the consequence and the development of the primitive social dualism above described Having in the preceding Series considered this social development in its first aspect, we now proceed to examine its progress under the second point of view.

Influence of Scientific Thinkers, Artists, and Artisans, spontaneous not systematic, social not political

It would assuredly be absurd to suppose that the New System has been organised by Scientific Thinkers, Artists, and Artisans, in accordance with a predetermined unvarying plan pursued from the eleventh century to our own time. At no period has the progress of society been regulated by a system conceived by a man of genius and adopted by the masses [1] This would, from the nature of

[1] The capital error of the legislators and philosophers of antiquity, in truth, lay in their endeavouring to regulate the progress of Civilisation by their systematic views, whereas the latter should have been subordinated to the former This error was, nevertheless, very excusable and natural on their part; for at that epoch the origin of Civilisation was too recent to allow of anyone observing its law of progress, or even perceiving the existence of such a law, much less recognising that its course lies beyond our control

Evidently this truth could only be reached *a posteriori*, and not *a priori* In other words, Politics could

things, be impossible, for the law of human progress guides and dominates all; men are only its instruments Although this force springs from ourselves, it is no more possible for us to withdraw from its influence or control its action than to change at our pleasure the original impulse which causes our planet to revolve around the sun

Secondary results, alone, are subject to our control All that we can do is consciously to obey this law, which constitutes our true providence, ascertaining the course it marks out for us, instead of being blindly impelled by it Here, in truth, lies the goal of the grand philosophic revolution reserved for our own times. Nevertheless, when the political order presents a series of events connected together exactly as if their human agents had framed such a plan, is not such an hypothesis admissible as a means of elucidating this connection of events?[1] In doing so we should merely employ, with still less departure from the reality, the method adopted in the physical sciences, where intentions and design are attributed even

not become a science without a basis of observation, and observations could only be made after a prolonged period of civilised existence. It was necessary to await the establishment of a social system, which should embrace numerous populations consisting of several great nations, and last a long while, before a theory could be founded upon this vast experience

[1] I may be allowed also to remark that, admitting it to be true that science becomes positive only when founded on observed and acknowledged facts, it is equally certain (as the history of intellect in all directions proves) that no branch of knowledge acquires a scientific character until an hypothesis has combined all its fundamental facts

Thus, whenever Politics shall have become a science, it is certain that it will employ hypotheses, as the other sciences do, and that they will be employed in the sense pointed out above.

to inorganic matter in order to afford a clearer view of the phenomena. Besides, as regards their consequences, a great resemblance subsists between a connected series of events and a premeditated plan; and we shall presently see that the evolution of the New System was determined by the original constitution of its elements.

Course followed by the Commons

The following may be regarded as the plan adopted by the Commons, from the period of their emancipation, for gradually preparing the reorganisation of society on a new and suitable basis: to employ themselves solely with operations upon Nature in order to utilise her powers for the benefit of the Human Race, and to exercise an action upon men only so far as was necessary in order to enlist their co-operation in this aim

Such, in brief, was the simple plan invariably pursued from the outset by Men of Science and Artisans, who started with a single object, the former of studying Nature in order to understand her, the latter of applying this knowledge to satisfy the wants and desires of Mankind

This course was so wise that a better could not have been selected, had scientific men and artisans framed one advisedly

In fine, this plan is so perfect that nothing remains for us now but to apply it to the general direction of society, in like manner as our forefathers, step by step, brought it to bear on each part of the social organisation

It is easy to explain why this plan was followed without premeditation or even conscious action. After giving this explanation we shall briefly indicate the ground of its success

The Commons, by the very fact of their enfranchisement, were freed from the state of individual dependence which previously weighed upon them,

but the artisans and men of science remained collectively dependent upon the military and theological classes.

At the outset this dependence was so great and the Commons were so weak that they were manifestly unable to withdraw from it. But this obstacle, which at first sight seemed inimical to their interests, really assured the success of their efforts. They were thus preserved from being led astray, and constrained, by an invincible necessity, to pursue the course which was really the wisest. Debarred from the idea of sharing in government, or even of withdrawing themselves from the collective despotism, the Commons only sought to profit by the degree of individual liberty they had gained, in such a way as to develop to the utmost the Scientific and Industrial Capacities

Men of science and artists only endeavoured to act upon Nature, the one to obtain, by observation and experiment, a knowledge of her laws, the other to apply this knowledge to the production of necessary, useful, or agreeable objects In adopting this course they simply followed a natural tendency to ameliorate our lot; for, in consequence of their political inferiority, this action upon Nature was the only course which the Commons could adopt for improving their social condition. Hence we may clearly perceive the force which obliged the Commons to pursue, unconsciously, the plan above indicated.

As a means of showing how conformable to their real interests was this plan, let us put a case. Assuming then that the condition of affairs was not originally such as I have described it, let us imagine that the Commons had, immediately after their enfranchisement, obtained a full share of political power, what use would they have made of this power? what would have occurred? In

all probability the result would have been as follows

Their participation in political power would have caused them to lose sight of their true aim,—the development of the Industrial and Scientific Capacities. At all events this development would have been far slower than it was, and consequently the Commons would have continued, for a much longer period, in subjection to the military and theological powers. For it needed a powerful awakening of the sense of common interests combined with the force of demonstration to enable them to struggle with marked success against physical force combined with that of superstition. Accordingly, both in France and in England, the Commons did not, until a comparatively recent period, evince any great anxiety to assume those legislative functions which were accorded to them in each country, during the struggles of Royalty with Feudalism, by one or other of these branches of the Temporal Power.[1]

[1] The alliance of the Commons with one portion of the Temporal Power against the other, in France and England, was really very serviceable to the artisans and men of science, but this coalition should be considered in reference to the destruction of the Old System, and not to the organisation of the New one In the First Series of remarks, I have thus considered it.

The small anxiety evinced by the Commons to profit by the share in the legislative power secured for them by their allies in the Old System, was clearly manifested in England, where, nevertheless, the Commons have pursued with greater vigour than elsewhere this kind of political progress. We know that previous to the epoch when they began to have a voice in the imposition of taxes, they regarded the sending of deputies to Parliament as a heavy burden, because the feudal nobility only summoned them in order to ascertain how much the Commons could pay, and to plunder them accordingly.

Advantages of the course pursued by the Commons

Let us now examine directly the advantages of the course followed by the Commons.

Without troubling themselves as to the way in which the military and theological authorities directed society, and putting, as it were, out of view the Old System, the Commons set to work to organise all the special departments left to their control, with the single object of operating upon Nature By adopting this wise course, they were assured, not only of giving no displeasure to the existing Powers, but of being agreeable to them and receiving from them every encouragement compatible with their exercise of authority More than that, they were certain, little by little, through their extensive action on Nature and the riches and consideration thus acquired, to redeem themselves gradually from the oppression that weighed upon them.

Finally, they could reckon on being able, by the advance of Industrial and Scientific Capacity, to acquire a progressive increase of force, which would gradually allow of their treating with their rulers as equals, and, eventually, of obtaining an ascendancy over them; and this has in our day really become possible.

Those who place their happiness in exercising an arbitrary authority merely for the pleasure of exerting it are, fortunately, very rare anomalies in human nature The majority of men desire power, when placed within their reach, not as an end but as a means They value it, less from love of authority,[1] than because their idleness and in-

[1] This love of authority, though certainly indestructible in man, has nevertheless been, to a great degree, nullified by the progress of Civilisation, or, at least, its inconveniences have almost disappeared in the New System. In fact, the development of our action upon

capacity disposes them to employ others in procuring enjoyments instead of themselves joining in this labour.

The dominant aim of almost all persons is not to act upon Man, but upon Nature. There is hardly anyone who does not eagerly renounce even absolute authority, when its exercise excludes the enjoyment of those advantages of Civilisation which result from our action upon things. The English nabob who has made his fortune in Bengal, and exercises an unlimited power over thousands of Hindoos, sighs for the moment when he can return to Europe and there possess the enjoyments of life, though he well knows that in England he cannot commit the smallest arbitrary act against the meanest sailor without risk to himself We are, therefore, certain to succeed with most men, when it is proposed to sacrifice a certain degree of authority by way of exchange for a certain measure of dominion over things

Thus the success of the plan followed by the Commons from the period of their enfranchisement was founded on a Law of Human Nature

We are in this way able to explain the cause of all the chief advances effected by the elements of the New Social System during their gradual

Nature has changed the direction of this sentiment, by guiding it towards things The desire to command men has gradually transformed itself into that of modifying Nature at our pleasure.

From this moment the love of power, born in all men, ceased to be hurtful or, at least, we may anticipate the time when instead of doing harm it will do good Thus it is that Civilisation has perfected man's moral nature, not merely as regards the intellect but also as to the passions. Though, by virtue of the laws of the human organisation, the latter order of vital functions is not directly susceptible of improvement, it becomes so through the influence exercised by the former.

organisation. These advances were essentially due to the perseverance of the Commons in following the simple and complete plan above expounded. Events, independent of this plan, accelerated its success; but the plan itself mainly determined the result. It, therefore, only remains for us to recapitulate the various kinds of progress realised

In order to avoid confusion in expounding the New System, in reference to its Temporal and Spiritual development, it is requisite to distinguish between the advances effected by the mass of the Commons and those made by their temporal and spiritual Leaders. Moreover, the Social and the Political progress of the New System should be separately considered. By its social progress we understand its internal development, apart from all relations with the Old System, by its political progress the influence which the latter allowed the New System to exercise in the formation of the political order, as well as the share of legislative authority which it obtained.

Temporal Progress of the new social system under the new Leaders.

Let us now consider the social and political progress of the New System under their Temporal aspects, and among these, first, the Social Progress

This is not the place for retracing, even in a summary way, the truly vast improvements effected by Art and Industry since the emancipation of the Commons Let us simply review them in reference to the organisation of the New System.

Since this epoch the Industrial Capacity has attained to a development which even the most vivid imagination cannot accurately represent. All the arts previously known have been prodigiously improved, and a far larger number of new arts discovered Agriculture has multiplied its products enormously. Commercial relations

have been incalculably improved and have been, at the same time, largely extended, especially since the discovery of the New World In a word, the action of the human race upon the external world has been largely increased, and, so to speak, created

As the result of this increased action, a much larger portion of the human race in civilised countries is now abundantly and securely provided with the necessaries of life, although population has greatly increased Objects of convenience and luxury have also come into use to a proportionate extent

The following are the chief results of this progress in reference to the Temporal organisation of the New System.

Increasing preponderance of the Commons

The Commons have gradually acquired a preponderating influence and consideration All social arrangements have fallen under their control, all the real forces of society have come into their hands, and, since the invention of gunpowder, even the military power has become subordinated to them

On the one hand, the discovery of gunpowder destroyed the physical superiority over the artisans which the possession of arms conferred upon the military classes, and supplied the former with the means of self-protection without receiving a soldier's education On the other hand, it placed the entire system of War in dependence upon the industrial arts and sciences of observation

At the same time, War having thus become more and more costly, it could no longer be carried on without loans, for which the military power was dependent upon the Commons In a word, matters gradually reached the stage when War became impossible if the Industrial and Scientific Capacities refused their co-operation

From the Temporal point of view the political advances of the New System were the direct and necessary result of its social progress. In proportion as the Commons acquired greater riches, with more consideration and civic importance, they augmented their influence over the general direction of society, and their direct political authority.

The Commons in England

It is in England chiefly that the advance of the Commons in this respect should be observed, because it has been most evident there [1]

The Commons having, in the English Parliament, begun by slowly obtaining a kind of consultative voice in the vote on taxation, gradually obtained a deliberate voice, and, in the end, the right of supply was specially conceded to them Their exclusive right on this head was irrevocably made a fundamental principle of the constitution in the settlement of 1688.

At the same time, the influence of the Commons in the formation of the general political plan became increasing large It reached such a pitch in England at this epoch, that the ruling powers admitted as a general principle that social pros-

[1] Almost immediately after their enfranchisement the Commons were invited, in France no less than in England, to co-operate in the formation of the States General, but in France this step produced hardly any results

I take this opportunity of stating that I have not felt it desirable to consider the attempts made soon after their emancipation, at almost all points of civilised Europe, but especially in Germany and Italy, to organise industrial societies These attempts, indicating the birth of the New System, have left no durable trace They had not, nor could they have had, an organic character In so rapid a review, considerations of this kind, far from enlightening, would have confused the reader

perity is based upon Industry, and, consequently, that the political plan should be conceived in the interest of the Commons Under both these aspects the Old System has been modified in favour of the New one, as far as was possible, so long as society, as a whole, remained under the control of the Old System.

This progress effected by the Commons was assuredly very important, but it is also very important not to exaggerate its significance or to confound a mere modification with a total change of system

The exclusive right of voting the taxes granted to the Commons, should, theoretically, have invested them with supreme political power. But in fact, up to the present time, this right has benefited them very little, because they have not really exercised it The House of Commons has been at bottom merely a sort of appendage to Royalty and Feudalism, an instrument in the hands of the Old System Moreover, the maxim admitted in England by the Temporal Power that the political plan should be conceived in the interests of Industry, has, to the present time, but slightly benefited the Commons The reason for this is, that the Old System, commanding the situation and of necessity preserving its position until the New System was definitely organised, could only place at the service of the Commons its peculiar modes of action—namely, force and cunning In this way, since the famous Navigation Laws, the Temporal Power has systematically fought and plotted, in order to serve the interests of the Commons

The establishment of the Parliamentary system in England must, therefore, be regarded as having, as far as was possible, modified the Old System and supplied a transition to the New System In this

respect only was it useful to the Commons, for, considered in itself and absolutely, its results were at least as mischievous as they were useful to them

The Parliamentary System in France

France, by her recent adoption of the English constitution, has placed herself on a level with England in both of the above respects, with this advantage, however, that the change having been effected at a much more advanced period of civilisation, it was far more complete Feudalism having been overthrown before the Parliamentary system was adopted, the Old System was modified far more deeply in France than in England The principle which proposes the interests of the Commons, as the end and rule of political combinations, has there acquired a broader, more general, and preponderating character

In fine, the Parliamentary system having been first established in France at a period when the necessity for a total change in the political system was profoundly felt, its transitional character has become much more marked

Spiritual Progress of the new social system under the new Leaders

Let us next study the social and political progress of the New System, in reference to the Spiritual Power

Before the introduction of the Positive Sciences into Europe, all special as well as general knowledge was either Theological or Metaphysical The few speculations about Nature then suggested were exclusively founded upon religious beliefs. But from this memorable epoch, the Natural Sciences, more and more, sought for a basis in observation and experiment Nevertheless, down to a recent period, they suffered from an admixture of superstition and metaphysics It was only towards the end of the sixteenth and the early years of the



seventeenth centuries that they succeeded in entirely disengaging themselves from theological beliefs and metaphysical hypotheses The epoch at which they began to be truly positive must be referred to Bacon who gave the first signal of this great revolution, to his contemporary, Galileo, who furnished its earliest exemplification; and, lastly, to Descartes who irrevocably emancipated the intellect from the yoke of authority in matters of science Then it was that Natural Philosophy arose and the Scientific Capacity acquired its true character, that of contributing the Spiritual element of a New Social System.

From this epoch, the sciences successively became positive in the natural order of sequence, that is to say, according to their degree of remoteness from Man Thus, Astronomy first, then Physics, later Chemistry, and finally, in our own day, Physiology, have been constituted as positive sciences. This revolution, then, has been completely accomplished for all special branches of knowledge, and evidently approaches its consummation for Philosophy, Morals, and Politics. The influence of theology and metaphysics on these subjects has already been destroyed in the eyes of all educated men, though such matters are not yet based upon observation. The realisation of this condition is alone wanting for the Spiritual development of the New Social System

In proportion as the sciences became positive and consequently advanced with increasing rapidity, a multitude of scientific ideas entered into general education, while the religious doctrines gradually lost their influence Special schools for the sciences arose, in which the influence of theology and metaphysics was almost nothing. Finally, the mental state has undergone such a change in this respect that in our day the ideas of

everyone, from the least instructed to the most enlightened, spring, almost entirely, from the positive sciences, the ancient beliefs occupying, comparatively speaking, but a small place, even in the classes over which these beliefs have maintained their strongest hold

It may be said without exaggeration that the doctrines of religion influence men's minds only so far as morality is still associated with them. This influence will, of necessity, continue until the epoch when Moral Philosophy has undergone the revolution already effected in all special branches of knowledge, and become positive From that moment the dominion of theological beliefs will cease for ever, since it is manifest that a state of things in which all the different branches of knowledge have become positive, while our general ideas remain superstitious, can only be transitional, since the contrary conclusion implies a contradiction in the general course of things

The increased political importance of Science.

The Political advances of the New System, in its Spiritual aspects, have likewise been the inevitable consequence of its social progress

Since the establishment of the first schools for teaching the Sciences of Observation in the thirteenth century, the Royal power in France and the Feudal power in England constantly and increasingly encouraged the sciences and elevated the status of scientific men

In France royalty, more and more, adopted the practice of consulting men of science, seeking their approbation in reference to matters they were competent to decide, thus implicitly recognising the superiority of scientific over theological and metaphysical ideas

Little by little our kings came to regard as a matter of duty, acts which they originally regarded

as praiseworthy, and recognised the obligation of encouraging the sciences and deferring to the decisions of scientific men. The creation of the Academy of Sciences,[1] instituted under Louis XIV. by his minister Colbert, was a formal declaration of this principle At the same time, that institution was a first step towards the political organisation of the Spiritual element of the New System

Since this epoch, the intellectual influence of the Scientific Capacity has greatly multiplied the number of Academies in all parts of Europe This influence has been established in a regular and legal manner Its political authority has proportionably increased, and has exerted a direct and ever-increasing influence upon national education Regarded from this point of view, the legal attributes with which the first class of the Institute is actually endowed are nearly as extensive as they could be, so long as the body exercising them is not charged with the teaching of morals.[2]

[1] [In 1666]

[2] As a general proposition, it is clear that the supreme direction of national education and the teaching of morals ought to be in the same hands it would be absurd to separate them Accordingly, so long as morals remain solely based upon religious beliefs, it is inevitable that the general direction of education should appertain to a theological body or, at least, to the theological spirit

The men who, in our day, speak so strongly against the Jesuits, the Missionaries,[1] and other religious corporations should, therefore, consider that the only way to deprive these societies of their remaining influence is to base morals upon the observation of facts Until this has been accomplished, all such complaints must prove almost useless, because they are in great part unfounded

[1] [This religious association, founded during the Restoration, worked in France It had no connection with Foreign Missions]

But this cannot take place until Morals has become a positive science In this respect, then, as in all others previously considered, the Old System has yielded its place to a New one, preparing the way for this as far as possible. Further progress can only be effected by organising the New System

International aspect of Science and Industry.

It is essential to observe that while scientific activity has increasingly consolidated and extended itself in each European nation, considered apart from the rest, the scientific forces of the different countries have also become more and more closely connected. The sentiment of nationality has been, in this respect, usually set aside, and men of science in all parts of Europe have formed an indissoluble league, which has always tended to make the scientific advances effected at each period European property This Holy Alliance, against which the Old System has no resource, is more powerful for realising the organisation of the New System, than the coalition of all the bayonets of Europe can be for arresting or even for checking its progress

Up to a certain point, the same combination has taken place between the Industrial Capacities of the various European nations , but it has been far less complete The sentiment of national rivalship, the inspirations of a savage and absurd patriotism, created by the Old System and by it studiously kept alive, have still maintained a great influence over the Temporal element For this reason, the alliance of the various European nations for the organisation of the New System can only begin in reference to the Spiritual element. The coalition of the Temporal Capacities must arise after, and as a result of, the former movement

Engineers

Lastly; it is important to remark that while the two elements of the New System were separately effecting national and European progress towards their final political organisation, the combination of the two elements and, consequently, the formation of the System, has also been accomplished with increasing success. A class which occupies an intermediate position between men of science, artists, and artisans, that of Engineers, sprang up, and thenceforward the combination of the two Capacities may be considered as having begun. This alliance has increased to such an extent that, now, the concurring judgment of scientific men, and of artisans (though less decidedly as regards the latter), regards the Sciences and Arts as destined to modify Nature for the benefit of Man, the former by mastering her secrets, the latter by applying the knowledge so acquired.

Numerous establishments, both public and private, chiefly in France and England, have given life to this principle by organising the above combination Such are, in France, the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, and the various schools connected with it; the Société d'encouragement de l'Industrie, the École des Ponts et Chaussées.

Thus not only has each of the two elements of the New System in its turn advanced towards complete organisation, and finally outstripped the corresponding element of the Old System, but their combination has continually perfected itself, thus preparing the way for their joint direction of society

Social Progress of the People under the New System

In the preceding remarks we have only considered the social and political progress effected by the spiritual and temporal Leaders of the New System. It remains to consider the steps

accomplished by the mass of the People towards the new social organisation

These steps have been of two sorts, one, the capacity acquired by the Masses for living under the new temporal and spiritual order, the other, their progressive co-ordination under the new temporal and spiritual Leaders

A population must have reached a certain degree of temporal and spiritual capacity, before it can live under a system of social order which is not based, temporally, on Force, and, spiritually, on blind Faith. That man cannot be emancipated who, as to the former, has not contracted certain habits of order, economy, and love of work, and who, as to the latter, does not possess, in a sufficient degree, knowledge and foresight. Such a man must continue in leading strings So also as regards a nation. until it has fulfilled these conditions it can only be governed in an arbitrary manner. Thus, for example, the Russian serfs who, in a time of pressing need, eat the seed-corn, are still incapable of enjoying even individual liberty To attempt their emancipation before they had contracted better habits would be a real absurdity which could not lead to success While in France, where the entire mass of the nation can endure hunger without touching the seed-corn, the people do not require to be governed (that is to say, commanded). It is sufficient for the maintenance of Order that the affairs of common interest should be regulated

In like manner, as regards the Spiritual function, people who, for example, have sufficient confidence in sorcerers to allow themselves to be guided by them in affairs of importance, require to be arbitrarily governed by more enlightened men. Such people could not be abandoned to their own guidance without injury to their

interests But it is evident that so soon as the masses are competent to conduct their ordinary affairs by their own knowledge, and thus satisfy the two conditions above mentioned, they do not need to be despotically ruled, but may be left to follow their own guidance without danger to public tranquillity We may even say that every exertion of arbitrary power, exercised at a period when it has become useless, tends to disturb tranquillity rather than to maintain it

Since the Enfranchisement of the Commons, the mass of the French population has gradually contracted the habits, and acquired the degree of enlightenment, requisite for living under the New System The abolition of slavery has of itself rendered all men proprietors, and since that time proletaries, in the rigorous acceptation of that word, have not existed It is also right to observe that the industrial property derived from enfranchisement naturally requires a much greater capacity than territorial property, as this now exists. For the latter, apart from its cultivation, requires no other talent than that of enjoying the income, with sufficient moderation not to encroach on capital It is the cultivator of the soil, and not its proprietor, who has need of capacity

The People, having acquired property, have gradually contracted a love for order and work, with habits of forethought and respect for property,[1] and have, at the same time, in France, England, and the North of Germany acquired the elements of knowledge

[1] When in the terrible famine of 1794, at the very moment that the lowest class of the people was all-powerful, this same class was seen dying by thousands, without any disturbance to public tranquillity, we may well say that the French people know how to respect property

Much, doubtless, remains to be done under both these aspects, and especially the second But the progress made has been sufficient to render it unnecessary that the People should be governed by force and superstition The masses have acquired sufficient capacity for living together under the New System, in which the action of Government should be reduced to what is indispensable for establishing a subordination of work, in that general action of Man upon Nature which is the final aim of the system

In truth, the maintenance of public tranquillity is, in our times, essentially due to these new habits alone, the military apparatus of the Temporal, and the infernal apparatus of the Spiritual, power contributing to this end only in an accessory manner [1]

The Organisation of Industry

Let us now examine in what way the population gradually organised itself under its New Temporal and Spiritual Leaders

Before the Enfranchisement of the Commons, the only and permanent leaders of the masses were the military classes. On the contrary, since their enfranchisement, the People have gradually detached themselves from these leaders and at the same time organised themselves under the

[1] The influence of the Old System is still indispensable for the maintenance of Order, but in a different way altogether from that we have just considered It is only required as a check on the disturbance of public tranquillity, by ambitious and intriguing men contending for a power which must excite their avidity, until the New System has been definitively organised But the People do not thus aim at power, those who do so are the idle and parasitic class of society, that is to say, the ancient feudalism and the feudalism of Bonaparte

guidance of the Industrial Leaders. Towards these the People have contracted habits of subordination and discipline which, though not strict, are quite sufficient for maintaining industrial order and the harmony of society.

To the origin of permanent and paid armies, as instituted by Charles VII,[1] we may refer the epoch of the complete separation of the People from their military leaders During the interval which separated their enfranchisement from the birth of this institution, the masses were placed, pretty equally, under the authority of the two kinds of leaders As to all usual works of peace they were under the direction of the industrial leaders, but as to military works and exercises they were, generally speaking, under the command of the military leaders

Standing and paid armies once established, the business of a soldier having thus become the pursuit of a particular class severed from the general population, the mass of the People had no longer any relation with the military leaders, and no other organisation than an industrial one The soldier no longer regarded himself, or was regarded, as belonging to the People He passed from the ranks of the New System into those of the Old, from the commonalty into the feudal class, and that was all. he altered his own character and not that of the system to which he previously belonged

Thus this institution of standing armies, which in our day has, by the progress of Civilisation, become so burthensome and useless, was indispensable as a transitional step towards the organisation of the New System

Considering the present condition of the People, we shall perceive that, as regards temporal matters,

[1] [Reigned, 1422–1461]

they have no direct and constant relations except with their Industrial Leaders Follow out in thought the daily relations of the workman, whether in agriculture, manufactures or commerce, and you will find that he is brought into habitual contact with agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial leaders, and not at all, for example, with the great lord and landed proprietor, or the sleeping partner to whom the manufactory or commercial establishment wholly or in part belongs Any connection he has with the military leaders of society arises from the general relations of the New with the Old System: he has none of a different kind.

This is the proper place for observing the fundamental and advantageous difference which exists between the present organisation of the People under their Industrial leaders and their former subjection to their Military leaders This difference will bring out one of the most important and happiest contrasts between the Old and the New System

In the Old System the people were *enrolled* under their leaders, in the New they are *combined* with them The military leaders *commanded*, the industrial leaders only *direct* In the first case the People were *subjects*, in the second they are *associates*. Such is the admirable character of industrial combinations that all the participants are in fact co-workers and partners, from the humblest workman to the richest manufacturer and the ablest engineer.

In a society embracing men who neither bring capacity nor capital, there must necessarily be masters and slaves; otherwise the workmen would not be so foolish as to consent to such an arrangement if they could avoid it It is impossible to conceive such a society originating in any other

way than by force But in a system of co-operation where all bring capacity and contribution, there is a real partnership, and no inequality exists but that of capacity and capital, both necessary (that is to say, unavoidable) The disappearance of such inequality it would be absurd and mischievous to expect

Each person obtains a degree of importance and advantages proportionate to his capacity and contribution, and this constitutes the highest degree of equality which is either possible or desirable Such is the fundamental character of industrial society, and this the people have gained by organising themselves in subordination to the Leaders of the arts and trades Their new leaders exercise no authority over them save what is strictly necessary for maintaining good order in their work, and this amounts to very little The Industrial Capacity is by its nature as averse to exercising, as to suffering, arbitrary power Besides, let us not forget that in a society of workers everything naturally tends to order. disorder always comes from the idle.

Finally, let us remark that the progress of Industry, the Sciences, and the Fine Arts, by multiplying the means of subsistence, diminishing the number of the unoccupied, enlightening men's minds, and softening manners, tends, more and more, to banish the three great causes of disorder—poverty, idleness, and ignorance.

Transference of the People's Faith from Theology to Science

We have now, in reference to the Spiritual element, to make observations analogous to those which have just been offered as regards the Temporal aspects of society

Before the introduction of the Positive Sciences into Europe, or, to speak more correctly, before the sciences had passed from the hands of the clergy

into those of the laymen—an event which followed the first very closely—the mass of the People were spiritually organised under their theological leaders. The People believed on their bidding, consulted them on every matter and blindly followed their decisions; such doctrines as it suited them to establish became the faith of the masses. In a word, the People contracted in relation to them a habit of absolute confidence and of unlimited mental submission. But from the moment that the Positive Sciences acquired a certain development, this confidence and respect were gradually withdrawn from the clergy and transferred to the men of science.

This change was powerfully seconded by the analogous change effected in Temporal relations. The People, industrially organised, soon perceived that their ordinary mechanical labours were in no wise connected with theological ideas, that they could not derive from theologians any real information about the objects of their daily occupations. Wherever they could establish a connection, direct or indirect, with men of science, they lost the habit of consulting the clergy and adopted that of putting themselves into relation with those who possessed positive knowledge. Doubtless this relation is still very far from being as intimate as it might and ought to be, but this chiefly springs, not from a deficient love of knowledge among the People, but from the want of opportunities and of efforts to supply them with useful information. On the contrary, the People are far more desirous of instruction than the idle frequenters of our drawing-rooms, because their labours at every moment impress on them their need of it. Whenever the People could study they have studied. But although the action of Scientific Capacity on them is still very small,

compared with what it may become, it is much greater than we usually imagine Striking and incontestable facts prove that the People in our day accord to the unanimous opinion of Men of Science the same degree of confidence which in the Middle Age they accorded to the decisions of the Spiritual Power

Thus, for example, for about one century the People have unanimously ceased to believe in the immovability of the earth, and accepted the theory of modern astronomy, with as much confidence as they ever accorded to the ancient religious beliefs What is the cause of this revolution in popular opinion? Is it that the People have acquired a knowledge of the demonstrations which establish the theory of the movement of the earth? Certainly not, since these demonstrations are probably not understood by more than three thousand persons in the entire French population The confidence of the People evidently flows from their having perceived the unanimity of men of science on this head

Let us examine in like manner all the discoveries in the Sciences of Observation which have been popularised, and we shall find that they have become so in the same way Thus the People have successively accepted the circulation of the blood, the identity of lightning with electricity, etc. etc Besides, as regards the sciences, all who cannot comprehend scientific proof resemble the People. The same confidence which induced men of the world to accept the analysis of air and water, the law of universal gravitation, the decomposition of light, and so many other astronomical, physical, chemical, and physiological discoveries will induce their acceptance by the People somewhat later.

It is, then, proved by the plainest facts that the

People have now, spiritually, confidence in and subordinate themselves to their Scientific Leaders, just as they do, temporally, to their Industrial Leaders Consequently I am entitled to infer that in the New System confidence has become organised as well as subordination

Faith in Science is relative, not absolute

We should, likewise, observe here that the confidence of the People in their new spiritual leaders is, by its nature, quite distinct from that which they felt under the Old System for their theological leaders The latter consisted in a thoroughly blind state of mental submission, which required from each individual an absolute negation of his own reason Confidence in the opinions of Men of Science has an entirely different character It is the assent given to propositions about matters susceptible of verification, and unanimously admitted by men who have acquired and established a capacity for judging them

In truth, the facts are admitted without proof, but they are thus admitted only because the public consider themselves incapable of following the demonstrations which establish these truths. This confidence always, by implication, reserves the right of contradiction in case new demonstrations should be produced which show it to be unfounded, or the believer should acquire sufficient knowledge to contest the received opinions The People are thus far from renouncing the free exercise of their reason

This confidence of the People in the opinions of Men of Science is absolutely of the same kind as, though much greater than, that of scientific men towards each other.

Every day mathematicians accept the results of physiologists upon the faith of their word, and,

reciprocally, each class of scientific men in their respective spheres do the same.

In the same science, do we not constantly see scientific men put faith provisionally in the assurance of others before knowing and judging the demonstrations? What mathematician, for example, would refuse to admit without examination a proposition certified by Lagrange?

This faith produces no inconvenience in the sciences because it is only provisional. The confidence of the People in Men of Science has exactly the same character, only the provisional nature of their assent, though always regarded as such, is indefinitely prolonged. Thus this confidence is in no wise humiliating for the People, and could never affect their interests injuriously in the least degree, as did their mental subjection to the theologians.

The fear that a despotism founded on Science may one day establish itself would be a ridiculous and absurd chimera, and could only arise in minds entirely foreign to positive ideas.

The People are ready for the New Social Organisation

The people then being now, Spiritually and Temporally, organised for the New System, the most difficult step towards its establishment has been accomplished. This great change has simplified, as far as possible, the work of its definitive establishment, by reducing all that remains for its accomplishment to the relations between the Leaders of the New and the Leaders of the Old Systems.

The People no longer present any difficulty in solving the question.

The question will be resolved in the interest of the People, but they will remain outside and passive in relation to it.

The only danger to be feared, the only needful

precaution, is that of not allowing ourselves to be turned aside from the end by the intrigues of ambitious men, who contend among themselves for the falling remnants of the Old System

Such, in a general view, are the principal parts of the picture which, since the eleventh century, is presented to us by the progress of Civilisation, considered in reference to the gradual development of the New Social System Let us now sum up, as briefly as possible, the results of this great organic Series.

Summary of the Second Series.

We set out from this fundamental fact: the Enfranchisement of the Commons and the introduction of the Positive Sciences into Europe in the eleventh century created the two elements of a New Social System, Industrial capacity and Scientific capacity.

We next observed.

1st That the two elementary Capacities of the New Social System were established on bases of a character different from that of the Powers on which the Old System rested.

2nd. That these two Capacities established themselves outside of the Old System and so as to render themselves as independent of it as possible.

3rd. That the Commons, representing the union of the two Capacities, from the beginning adopted the wise course of not pretending to share authority with the Old System, but simply sought to profit by the independence they enjoyed, with a view to exercising the greatest possible action upon Nature.

4th. That this plan, persistently followed, had its twofold and natural effects On the one hand, the elements of the New System have acquired their full and complete development, whence has flowed the preponderance of their civil force, on the other hand, they have gradually obtained

a larger measure of liberty of which they have always made use in the same manner, and, finally, they have naturally acquired a portion of legislative authority to which they did not directly aspire

5th That the entire Spiritual and Temporal forces of Society have passed into the hands of the Commons, the military force itself being subordinated to their influence.

6th That the Commons have obtained as great an influence over the political plan laid down by the Old System as was attainable, until they could themselves form the plan, the Temporal power having admitted in principle that the social organisation ought to be framed in the interest of the Commons

7th That the Temporal Power has established the Parliamentary system which, by conceding—at least in principle—to the Commons the exclusive right of voting taxes, invested them with as large a share of legislative authority as it could without destroying its own

8th That this measure of authority more than suffices for enabling the Commons in our day to proceed, directly and in a legal manner, to the final organisation of the New System

9th That contemporaneously with the progress thus effected by the Temporal and Spiritual Leaders of the New System, the mass of the People have entirely withdrawn from their military and theological chiefs and organised themselves, both under temporal and spiritual aspects, under the Leaders of the two positive Capacities

Finally, that the Old has thus yielded to the New System all that could be yielded without self-destruction and has smoothed the way for the latter to arrive at its definitive constitution

Such, then, is the actual condition of the New

System as resulting from the past since the eleventh century. All the forces of Society belong to it. All the doctrines necessary for its organisation exist in their germs, namely, the Sciences of Observation. In a word, Society, in all its parts, is organised for acting upon Nature. It only remains to organise it as a whole in the same way. The means which the Commons require to effect that object now exist.

GENERAL SUMMARY OF BOTH SERIES

When the Old System had attained its definitive constitution (in the eleventh century), the elements of the system destined to succeed it took their rise.

From this epoch, two influences of a different nature have been simultaneously and uninterruptedly exerted by the New System, the one tending to destroy the Old one, the other to replace it

As regards the former influence, the Commons allied themselves at first with one of the Powers of the Old System against the other, while profiting by the divisions which arose between them; and, after having conquered the Power against which they had fought, the Commons formed a new league with one of the elements of the Power whose allies they had been, against another element of this same Power

As regards the latter influence, the Commons held themselves aloof from the Old System, limiting themselves to action upon Nature.

Destruction and construction have always been combined, so that the New System possessed itself

gradually of all the positions occupied by the Old one, according as they were abandoned by it

During the period of its unabated vigour, the Old System guided both the general action of Society and all special social movements, both Spiritual and Temporal Little by little, all the private relations and special branches of knowledge disengaged themselves from the bonds of the Old System and co-ordinated themselves in reference to the New Finally, the New System organised itself as to all the details of social life.

The Old System, after having completely lost all its influence on details, has, step by step, lost, in Temporal and Spiritual matters, the greater part of its command over the general action of Society

It still holds possession of the general political plan, which cannot be otherwise until the final organisation of the New System But it is admitted as a fundamental principle that this plan ought to be framed in the interest of the Commons

The Temporal Power has been reduced to the smallest dimensions compatible with its existence, until the entire extinction of the Old System and its replacement by the New one The Spiritual Power, as a political element, has been completely overthrown It retains no other influence than that derived from the fact that the teaching of Morals remains in its hands, as being still based upon its doctrines

The New System, after having obtained the exclusive direction of all the details of Society, has, step by step, gained in the ordering of the whole all that the Old System has lost

Under Temporal aspects, the right of the Commons to modify at their pleasure the general political plan has been recognised , and the legal exercise of this right has been regularly con-

stituted, the means of effecting the transition being thus also provided Under Spiritual aspects, the Scientific Capacity has obtained all the influence it can possess over national education, until the teaching of Morals has passed into its hands

The force of the two Systems in relation to the action they exercise upon the direction of Society, regarded as a whole, is in our day almost identical; any difference being rather in favour of the New than the Old System

Thus the actual condition of Society presents the co-existence of a declining and of an adult system, the former of which has lost all its influence over details and half of what it possessed over the whole, while the latter dominates every part and enjoys a larger share of influence over the whole

The New System then needs to mount but one step more in order to reach a complete organisation and entirely to replace the Old System It only remains for it to complete its temporal and spiritual achievements, in Temporal matters by gaining possession of the House of Commons, in Spiritual by establishing Morals on principles solely deduced from Observation. In truth, all is ready for this step, the means exist, we only require to use them

THIRD ESSAY

(*May 1822*)

PLAN OF THE SCIENTIFIC OPERATIONS NECESSARY FOR REORGANISING SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION

Our social anarchy and its sources

A SOCIAL system in its decline, a New System arrived at maturity and approaching its completion—such is the fundamental character which the general progress of Civilisation has assigned to the present epoch In conformity with this state of things, two movements, differing in their nature, agitate society, one a movement of disorganisation, the other of reorganisation By the former, considered apart, Society is hurried towards a profound moral and political anarchy which appears to menace it with a near and inevitable dissolution. By the latter, it is guided to the definitive social condition of the human race, that best suited to its nature, and in which all progressive movements should receive their completest development and most direct application In the co-existence of these two opposed tendencies consists the grand crisis now experienced by the most civilised nations, and this can only be understood when viewed under both aspects.

From the moment when this crisis began to show itself to the present time, the tendency of the Old System to disorganisation has predominated, or, rather, it alone is still plainly manifested. It was in the nature of things that the crisis should begin

thus, so that the Old System might be sufficiently modified to permit the direct formation of the New Social System.

But now that this condition has been fully satisfied and the Catholic-Feudal system has lost its power, as far as is possible, until the New System has been inaugurated, the preponderance still maintained by the negative tendency constitutes the greatest obstacle to the progress of Civilisation and even to the abolition of the Old System Its persistence forms the first cause of those terrible and continually renewed shocks by which the crisis is accompanied.

The only way of ending this stormy situation, of staying the anarchy which day by day invades society, in a word, of reducing the crisis to a simple moral movement, consists in inducing the civilised nations to abandon the negative and to adopt an organic attitude , turning all their efforts towards the formation of the New Social System, as the definitive object of the crisis, and that for the attainment of which everything hitherto accomplished is only a preparation

Such is the prime necessity of the present epoch. Such also is the general object of my labours and the special aim of this essay, the object of which is to set in motion the forces capable of bringing Society into the track of the New System.

A brief examination of the causes which have hitherto hindered, and still do hinder, Society from frankly assuming an organic attitude, should naturally precede an exposition of the measures necessary for effecting this object

Plan of Reorganisation misconceived by Rulers and People

The numerous and repeated attempts made by both People and Kings to reorganise Society prove that the need of such a Reorganisation is generally felt. But on both sides it is

only felt in a vague and imperfect manner These two kinds of attempts are, though for different reasons, equally vicious Up to the present time, they have not, nor could they have, produced any real organic result. Far from tending to terminate the crisis, these efforts only contribute to prolong it Such is the true cause which, in spite of so many efforts, by keeping Society in the negative track, leaves it a prey to revolutions

To establish this fundamental proposition, it is sufficient to take a general view of the attempts at Reorganisation undertaken by Kings and the People

Errors of Rulers

The error committed by Kings is easier to understand For them the Reorganisation of Society means the re-establishment, pure and simple, of the Feudal and Theological System in all its integrity In their eyes, no other means exist of terminating the anarchy which results from the decline of this System

It would be unphilosophical to regard this view as if it were mainly dictated by the special interests of the governing classes Chimerical though it be, this idea naturally presented itself to minds seeking, in good faith, a remedy for the existing crisis They feel in its entire extent the need for a Reorganisation, but they have not considered the general progress of Civilisation, and, viewing the present state of affairs under one aspect only, they do not perceive the tendency of Society to establish a New System more perfect, and not less harmonious, than the Old one In a word, it is natural that this view should be taken by Rulers, since, from their position, they must of necessity perceive more clearly the anarchical state of society and, consequently, experience more forcibly the necessity for applying a remedy

This is not the place to insist on the manifest

absurdity of such an opinion, for that is now universally recognised by the majority of enlightened men Doubtless Kings, while seeking to reconstruct the Old System, do not comprehend the nature of the present crisis and are far from having measured the magnitude of their enterprise

The downfall of the Feudal and Theological System does not spring, as they believe, from recent, solitary, and, in some sort, accidental causes. That downfall, in place of being the effect of the crisis, is, on the contrary, its source The decline of this System has come to pass continuously during the preceding centuries, by reason of a series of modifications, independent of the human will, to which all classes of society contributed, and of which Kings themselves have often been the first agents and most eager promoters In a word, it was the necessary consequence of the progress of Civilisation

In order, then, to re-establish the Old System, it would not be sufficient to push Society back to the epoch when the existing crisis began to reveal itself For, even supposing this could be done, which it could not, we should have merely replaced the body politic in the situation which necessitated the crisis Retracing past ages, it would be requisite to repair, one by one, all the losses suffered by the Old System during six centuries, in comparison with which all that it has lost for the last thirty years is of no importance

No other mode of effecting this would be possible than that of annihilating all the results of Civilisation which have caused this decline

Thus, for example, it would be absurd to assume that the Eighteenth Century Philosophy—itself the direct cause of the downfall of the Old System, considered in its Spiritual aspects—could be

destroyed unless we also assumed the annihilation of the sixteenth century Reformation; of which the philosophy of the last century was only the consequence and development But as the Reformation of Luther was, in its turn, simply a necessary result of the progress of the Sciences of Observation introduced into Europe by the Arabs, the re-establishment of the Old System would not have been secured unless the positive sciences had been also suppressed.

In like manner, under Temporal aspects, we should be led, step by step, to the necessity for replacing the industrial classes in a state of serfdom, since, after all, the Enfranchisement of the Commons was the first and general cause of the decline of the Feudal System Finally, such an enterprise is set in its true light by this reflection, that after overcoming so many difficulties, the least of which taken by itself surpasses the power of man, we should have gained nothing but the postponement of the definitive fall of the Old System, by thus obliging Society to recommence its destruction, since the principle of progressive civilisation inherent in human nature would not have been extinguished

It is manifest that no person would entertain a project so monstrous, whether we consider its magnitude or its absurdity. Man, in spite of himself, belongs to his epoch. Those who oppose, as they believe, the greatest resistance to the progress of Civilisation unconsciously obey its irresistible influence, nay, themselves second it.

Accordingly, Kings, in projecting the reconstruction of the Feudal and Theological System, fall into perpetual contradiction , contributing, by their own acts, both to complete the disorganisation of the System and to accelerate the formation

of that which must replace it Facts of this kind offer themselves abundantly to the observer.

To point out, in this place, only a few of the most remarkable, we see Kings esteem it an honour to encourage the cultivation and diffusion of the sciences and fine arts, and to stimulate the development of industry We see them creating for this purpose numerous and useful establishments, although the decline of the Old System is ultimately referable to the progress of the Sciences, Fine Arts, and Industry.

Then, again, Kings, by entering into the treaty of the Holy Alliance,[1] degraded as much as in them lay the principal basis of the Old System, the theological power, since they established a supreme European council in which that power had not even a consultative voice

Finally, the way in which opinions are now divided as to the struggle undertaken by the Greeks offers a still clearer example of this inconsistent spirit On this occasion,[2] we see the very men who aim at restoring their former influence to theological ideas involuntarily manifesting the decline of these ideas, since they do not fear to utter wishes in favour of Mohammedanism which would have drawn down upon them the accusation

[1] [The "Holy Alliance" was entered into by the Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Austria, and the King of Prussia in September, 1815 The Pope was not a member They agreed to be governed by Christian principles in all their political transactions with a view to perpetuating the peace they had achieved. Its actual object was the defence of Autocracy —S. H S]

[2] In order to appreciate the entire significance of this fact, we must remember that the Pope himself adopted the above view, by expressly refusing the young Roman nobles permission to go to the assistance of the Greeks

of sacrilege during the ascendancy of the Old System.

By pursuing the line of observation just indicated everyone can, without difficulty, add fresh instances, that occur continually Kings, so to speak, do no act, and take no step, tending to re-establish the Old System which is not immediately followed by an act directed in the contrary way, and the same decree often contains both one and the other

Such inconsistency in fundamentals is well fitted to place in the clearest light the absurdity of a plan, which is not understood even by those who endeavour to realise it with the greatest earnestness It shows clearly how complete and irrevocable is the ruin of the Old System. It is useless to enter here into greater details

Errors of the People

The manner in which the People have hitherto understood the Re-organisation of Society is no less erroneous than that adopted by Kings, though in a different way. Their error, however, is more excusable, since it lies in a misconception of the New System towards which the progress of Civilisation transports them, because its nature has not, as yet, been clearly determined, while Kings pursue an enterprise, the entire absurdity of which is plainly demonstrable, even by a superficial study of the past In a word, Kings are at variance with facts, the People with principles, the last being always more difficult to grasp But it is much more important to eradicate the misconception of the People than that of Kings, because the former constitutes an essential obstacle to the progress of Civilisation, and alone gives some show of reason to the latter

The characteristic view which predominates in the popular mind as to the mode of Reorganising Society indicates a profound ignorance of the

fundamental conditions necessary to give consistency to any social system

It essentially consists in attributing an organic character to the negative principles which served to destroy the Feudal and Theological System in other words, it takes mere modifications of the Old System as a foundation for the system which has to be established

If we attentively examine the doctrines now accredited among the People, as exhibited in the speeches of their ablest adherents and expounded in their most systematic writings, we shall find that, considered in themselves and in their successive growth, they are conceived in a purely critical spirit, incapable of affording any basis for Reorganisation

The Government which in a regular state of affairs stands at the head of Society as the guide and agent of general activity is, by these doctrines, systematically despoiled of every active influence Deprived of any important participation in the organic life of the body politic, it is reduced to an office of mere negation It is even thought that the entire action of the body politic upon its members ought to be strictly limited to the maintenance of public tranquillity But in no active society has this ever been other than a subordinate object, the importance of which has even been singularly diminished by the development of Civilisation, since this has made it easy to maintain Order

Government is, thus, no longer regarded as the head of Society, destined to bind together the component units and to direct their activity to a common end It is represented as a natural enemy encamped in the midst of our social system, against which Society needs to fortify itself by the guarantees already obtained, while maintaining a permanent attitude of mistrust and defensive hostility,

ready to break forth at the first symptom of attack.

Dogmas of Liberty of Conscience and Sovereignty of the People

Passing from the ensemble to details, the same spirit is still more apparent It suffices here to prove this in reference to the principal points affecting Spiritual and Temporal relations

Under Spiritual aspects, the principle pervading the popular aim is the dogma of unlimited Liberty of Conscience [1] Considered in the sense which it originally had, that is to say, in reference to a negative destination, this dogma is nothing but the extension of a great general fact, the decline of theological beliefs.

Itself the result of such decline, this doctrine has, by a necessary reaction, powerfully contributed to accelerate and propagate it, but by the nature of things its influence stopped there Regarded simply as a means of combating the theological system, the dogma in question favours the progress of the human mind But it ceases to do so and loses all its value when conceived as a basis for the great social Reorganisation reserved for our epoch It then becomes just as injurious as before it was useful, since it constitutes an obstacle to Reorganisation

Proclaiming the Sovereignty of each individual mind, this doctrine in fact essentially tends to

[1] [By the dogma of Liberty of Conscience, Comte meant the doctrine that each individual was a competent judge on all questions, whatever his training or his powers He contrasted with this the general acceptance of the results of modern scientific investigation He did not mean by liberty of conscience, liberty of expression, nor did he propose to limit freedom of speech and writing by legal measures. On the contrary, he insisted on the necessity of complete spiritual liberty —S. H. S]

hinder the uniform establishment of any system of general ideas, without which, nevertheless, Society cannot exist. For, let the mass of men become as highly instructed as is possible, it is evident that the greater part of the general conceptions currently received can only be accepted by them on trust, and not as the result of demonstration. Thus such a dogma is, by its very nature, only applicable to ideas destined to vanish and, therefore regarded with indifference, and, in point of fact, it has only been applied to such at the moment of their decline and in order to hasten their fall.

To apply this doctrine to the New System as well as to the Old one, still more to see in it an organic principle, is to fall into the strangest contradiction. If such an error could last, the Reorganisation of Society would be for ever impossible.

In Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry and Physiology there is no such thing as Liberty of Conscience, that is to say, everyone would deem it absurd not to place confidence in the principles established for these sciences by competent thinkers. If the case is different in Politics, this arises from the circumstance that, the old principles having been abandoned while the new are yet unformed, established principles during this interregnum do not in a just sense exist. But to convert this transitory fact into an absolute and eternal dogma, and treat it as a fundamental principle, evidently amounts to a proclamation that Society should always continue deprived of any general doctrinal basis. It must be admitted that such a notion justly deserves the charge of anarchy brought against it by the ablest defenders of the theological system.

Under the Temporal aspect, the dogma of the Sovereignty of the People corresponds to the

dogma just considered, of which it is only the political application It was created as a means of combating the principle of Divine Right, itself the general political basis of the Old System, shortly after the dogma of Liberty of Conscience had been formed to destroy the theological ideas on which this principle was founded

What has been said for one applies, therefore, to the other The anti-feudal dogma, like the anti-theological one, having effected its negative aim, has reached the natural term of its career The former can no more furnish the political basis of the Social Reorganisation than the latter its moral basis Both, being devised for purposes of destruction, are equally unfitted for construction.

One of these doctrines, far from furnishing an organic principle, merely substitutes Individual for Papal Infallibility, the other only replaces the arbitrary power of Kings by that of the People, or rather of individuals The "Sovereignty of the People" tends to dismember the body politic by placing power in the least capable hands; while the "Right of Private Judgment" tends to the complete isolation of thinkers, by investing the least enlightened men with an absolute right of control over the system of ideas conceived by superior intellects for the guidance of Society.

The criticism just developed as to these two fundamental dogmas can be easily applied to all the more special notions which constitute the popular philosophy The result will always be the same It will be seen that all of these, like the two principal ones, are merely the dogmatic expression of corresponding historical facts, relative to the decline of the Feudal and Theological System It will also be seen that all alike have a purely negative destination, which constitutes their only

value, and renders them wholly unfitted for Reorganising Society

Thus a careful examination of the popular doctrine confirms the anticipations of a philosophic survey, showing that weapons of war cannot be metamorphosed into instruments of construction This doctrine, purely negative, both as a whole and in detail, was most serviceable in seconding the natural course of Civilisation, as long as the main operation was the struggle with the Old System But when regarded as capable of presiding over Social Reorganisation, it is completely inadequate It forces Society into a condition of chronic anarchy in both temporal and spiritual relations.

No doubt it was natural to human weakness that the People should begin by attributing an organic character to negative principles, rendered familiar to them by continual applications But it is not the less true that the prolongation of such an error constitutes the principal obstacle to the Reorganisation of Society.

Comparison of the errors of Rulers and People

Next, comparing the two distinct modes—hitherto considered separately—in which the People and Kings conceive this Reorganisation, it will be seen that each of them, owing to its peculiar vices, is equally powerless to launch Society on an organic course, and so to secure the future against the return of the convulsions that have continually accompanied the great crisis which characterises the present epoch. Both are alike anarchical, the one by its own nature, the other by its necessary consequences

In this respect, the only difference between them is that, in the opinion of Kings, the Government should purposely place itself in direct and continuous opposition to Society, while, according to the

popular view, Society must take up a permanent attitude of hostility to Government

These two opposed and equally vicious conceptions tend by their very nature to strengthen each other reciprocally, and, in consequence, to maintain indefinitely the source of revolutions

On one hand, the attempts of Kings to reconstruct the Feudal and Theological System necessarily provoke, on the part of the people, an explosion of the negative doctrines in all their dangerous energy It is even apparent that in the absence of such attempts these doctrines would have already lost their main vigour, as no longer possessing any object Now that Kings have formally adhered to their fundamental principle (the dogma of Liberty of Conscience), with its consequences, the irrevocable decline of the Old System is clearly established. But the efforts to resuscitate the Divine Right of Kings revive the Sovereignty of the People and give it new life.

On the other hand, owing to the fact that the modifications introduced into the Old System already permit of direct attempts at the formation of the New System, the preponderance which the people still accord to negative principles naturally impels Kings to re-establish the Old System, as the only means of averting a crisis which, under its present aspect, appears to lead to nothing but the dissolution of Society And, in truth, such a prolongation of negative philosophy, when an organic doctrine is needed, alone imparts plausibility to the views of Kings For, admitting that their view, owing to the utter impossibility of realising it, is not really more organic than that of the People, in theory, at least, it is so, and since some system must exist, this circumstance places the kingly conception in some, though a very imperfect, relation with the wants of Society.

Let us add to this faithful picture of our social situation the influence of the various factions, whose projects are so eminently facilitated by such a state of things If we study their efforts to prevent light being thrown upon the social problem, and to hinder a better understanding and recognition of their mutual errors on the part of Kings and People, we shall form a just estimate of the melancholy situation in which Society is now placed

A Constructive Doctrine both necessary and opportune

The preceding considerations demonstrate that the way of final escape from this deplorably vicious circle, this inexhaustible source of revolutions, lies neither in the doctrine of Kings nor in that of the People The formation and general adoption by both People and Kings of an Organic Doctrine can alone suffice to withdraw the latter from their retrograde, the former from their negative, direction.

Such a doctrine can alone terminate the crisis by leading society into the track of the New System, which the growth of Civilisation has prepared and now offers as a substitute for the Catholic-Feudal System

By the unanimous adoption of this doctrine, satisfaction will be afforded to all that is reasonable in the existing opinions of both the People and of Kings, their discordant and vicious elements being discarded The just apprehensions of Kings as to the dissolution of society being dissipated, no legitimate motive can any longer urge them to oppose the growth of the human intellect. While the People, turning all their aspirations to the formation of the New System, will no longer feel irritated against the Catholic-Feudal System, but will await its peaceable extinction in the natural course of events.

Having thus established the necessity for adopting *a new and truly Organic Doctrine*, we shall next examine its expediency. It will be evident from the following considerations that the moment for commencing this great operation has at last arrived

A careful study of the present state of the most advanced nations forces upon the mind a singular and almost self-contradictory observation. Although no other political ideas exist but such as are founded either on the retrograde or the negative doctrine, neither of these possesses a real preponderance, and neither exerts an action sufficiently powerful to direct Society. These two doctrines which, as above shown, in theory lend force to each other, are, notwithstanding, employed only to impose reciprocal limits or, rather, to annul one another in the general conduct of affairs.

The great political movement produced during the last thirty years by the spread of negative ideas has destroyed their chief influence. On one hand, by giving the finishing blow to the Old System, it has terminated their natural career, and has almost completely taken away the ground which enlisted popular sympathies on their side On the other hand, the application of these new ideas to the Reorganisation of Society has completely manifested their anarchical character. Since this decisive experiment, negative aspirations have inspired no real passion among the People Consequently, notwithstanding any appearances to the contrary, truly retrograde passions can no longer exist among Kings, since they have distinctly recognised the decline of the Catholic-Feudal System and the necessity for abandoning it.

In neither direction is any real action exerted within the sphere of Government or of Society. Kings and People, in practice, employ the retro-

grade or negative doctrine in an essentially passive way, that is to say, as a weapon of defence Moreover, each side uses the two doctrines by turns and almost to the same extent, with, however, one natural difference Regarded as an instrument of reasoning, the negative doctrine attracts the People because they feel more completely the necessity for abandoning the Old System, while Kings adhere to the retrograde doctrine, since they experience more deeply the need of social order.

It is easy to verify and elucidate this remark by observing the existence of, and the credit enjoyed by, a mongrel doctrine which is nothing but a mixture of retrograde and negative ideas This phase of opinion, though possessing no influence at the outset of the crisis, has now become predominant both among Rulers and the Ruled. Both of the active parties unequivocally recognise its ascendancy since they equally adopt its language

The prevalence of such an opinion clearly establishes two facts most essential for the correct understanding of the present epoch. In the first place, it proves that the insufficiency of the negative doctrine for the great actual wants of society is felt as profoundly, and universally, as the incompatibility of the Catholic-Feudal System with the present state of Civilisation In the second place, it furnishes a guarantee against the ascendancy either of the negative or of the retrograde view For, whenever one of them seems about to acquire a preponderance, the disposition of men's minds immediately inclines to the other, and so remains, until this, encouraged by seeming approval, has become sufficiently active to cause similar alarms and, in consequence, experiences a similar revulsion of feeling[1] These succeeding oscillations

[1] The merit of this intermediate, or rather self-contradictory, doctrine consists precisely in its supply-

take place sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another, according as the natural course of events specially reveals either the absurdity of the Old System or the danger of Anarchy Such at this moment is the working system of practical politics, and such it will remain until men's attention is directed towards the mode of Reorganising Society, and a Public Opinion has been created capable of fulfilling the two grand conditions demanded by our epoch, but hitherto regarded as contradictory, namely, the abandonment of the Old System, and the establishment of a regular and stable Order of Society

ing an organ for the above attitude Besides, it is evidently devoid of constructive power, since it has no special character and is compounded of opposing views which mutually destroy each other. As experience has already clearly shown, its ascendancy can have no other result than that of causing Society to oscillate between negative and retrograde tendencies In the existing political situation, and while awaiting the establishment of a truly Organic Doctrine, this undecided course is certainly indispensable, as a means of preventing the violent disorders to which the preponderance of either the retrograde or negative party would expose Society In this sense, all rational men should be eager to forward it But while such a policy renders the Revolutionary Epoch less stormy, it incontestably tends to prolong its duration For a view which elevates a self-contradiction to the rank of a system, and induces men carefully to avoid the total extinction of the two extreme doctrines in order that one may always be opposed to the other, of necessity prevents the social body from ever attaining a stable condition In a word, in our day this policy is reasonable and useful if maintained as simply provisional, but becomes absurd and dangerous when regarded as definitive

Such are the reasons why, in my examination of the existing opinions on Social Reorganisation, I have not mentioned the above point of view.

This reciprocal annulling of the two opposite doctrines, observable even in opinions, is especially evident in active life In truth, when the important events of the last ten years are examined with reference both to the negative and retrograde tendencies, we shall discover that the latter have never contributed to the effective progress of the corresponding system, and that their result has only been to hinder the preponderance of the opposing system

To sum up, then, not only are the popular and monarchical doctrines equally incapable of satisfying that fundamental need of Reorganisation which characterises the present epoch—whence results the necessity for a new general doctrine—but the triumph of either in our day is alike impossible. Neither in truth can exercise any decided influence; and hence we may infer that men's minds are sufficiently prepared to receive the Organic Doctrine.

The destination of Society, now come to maturity, is neither to inhabit for ever the old and miserable hut which it erected in its infancy, as Kings suppose, nor to live eternally without shelter after having left it, as the People imagined. Its destiny is rather this, that, aided by acquired experience, it should with all the accumulated materials construct an edifice fitted for its needs and enjoyments. Such is the great and noble enterprise reserved for the present generation

GENERAL VIEW

Wrong methods hitherto used in framing the plan of Reorganisation.

The defects in the modes of conceiving the Reorganisation of Society by the People and by Kings having been shown, we are forced to conclude that both have pursued wrong methods

in framing the Plan of Reorganisation Such a state of things admits of no other explanation, but it is important to establish this assertion directly and accurately

The inadequacy of the Monarchical view and of that of the People prove the necessity for a new and truly Organic Doctrine, alone capable of ending the terrible crisis which agitates Society Similarly, by examining the methods which, on either hand, have led to these imperfect results, we shall discover the proper mode of shaping and establishing the new doctrine, and the social forces destined to direct this great work

The general defect of the method pursued, alike by the People and by Kings, in framing the Plan of Reorganisation, lies in the very erroneous conceptions formed respecting the nature of such a work Hence it followed that they confided this important mission to men who were necessarily unqualified for it This is the primary cause of the fundamental aberrations pointed out in the preceding Introduction

Although this cause has operated as much with Kings as with the People, it is useless to consider it specially in reference to the former For Kings not having invented anything, and having confined their efforts to reproducing the ancient doctrine so as to meet the wants of the new social order, their incompetence to conceive a true reorganisation has, by this fact alone, been sufficiently established On the other hand, for the same reason, their course, though in principle as absurd as that of the People, has naturally been more methodical, since it was furnished to their hand in detail. The People alone having produced a sort of new doctrine, our examination should be mainly directed to their mode of proceeding in order to discover the source of its defects It will be easy, after-

wards, to apply to Kings, with suitable modifications, the general remarks made in reference to the People.

Constitutions do not supply Social Reorganisation

The multitude of the so-called Constitutions produced by the People since the beginning of the crisis,[1] and the excessive minuteness of their dispositions, manifested more or less in all, would alone suffice to convince every capable intellect how entirely the nature and difficulty of forming a Plan for Social Reorganisation have been hitherto misunderstood. When Society shall have been reorganised, our descendants will be amazed at the production, within a period of thirty years, of ten Constitutions, each in succession proclaimed eternal and irrevocable, several of which contain more than two hundred very circumstantial articles, without reckoning the organic laws thereto annexed. Such verbiage would disgrace the human mind in Politics, were it anything but a mere phase and an unavoidable transition towards the true and final doctrine.

But society does not, and cannot, progress in this way. The pretension of constructing off-hand, in a few months or even years, a social system, in its complete and definitive shape, is an extravagant chimera absolutely incompatible with the weakness of the human intellect

Let us observe the mode which our intellect adopts in analogous but far simpler cases When a science is reconstituted on a new theoretical basis, sufficiently prepared, in the first instance the general principle is announced, discussed, and verified, subsequently, by a long series of efforts, all the parts of the science are worked out and their co-ordination established, which, at the outset, no one, not even its founder, could have conceived Thus, for example, after Newton had

[1] [i e., since the outbreak of the French Revolution.]

discovered the law of universal gravitation, a century of arduous labours and the co-operation of all European geometers were needed to confer on physical astronomy a constitution in harmony with the law. Similarly in the arts To cite but a single example, when the elastic force of steam was conceived as a new motive power applicable to machinery, nearly a century was needed for developing the series of industrial reforms which resulted directly from this discovery. If such evidently be the necessary and invariable course of the human mind in revolutions which, in spite of their importance and difficulty, are only special ones, how absurd must appear the presumptuous course hitherto followed in reference to the most general, momentous, and difficult of all revolutions —that which aims at completely recasting the Social System

If we pass from these comparisons, which, though indirect, are decisive, to direct comparisons, we shall always arrive at the same result. Let us examine the rise of the Catholic-Feudal system, a revolution of precisely the same nature as that of our own time Far from this system having been constituted off-hand, it did not assume its true and definitive shape until the eleventh century, that is to say, more than five centuries posterior to the general triumph of Christian doctrines throughout Western Europe, and the definitive settlement of the Northern populations in the empire of the West. No man, whatever might be his genius, could, in the fifth century, have foreshadowed, with any degree of precision, the plan of this constitution, although the fundamental principle, whence it necessarily flowed, was then firmly established, both under Temporal and Spiritual aspects Doubtless, owing to the progress of knowledge and the character of the social system—in itself more simple and

natural—which has to be established in our day, its complete organisation should be much more rapidly effected. But the progress of Society, depending as this does on the permanent nature of mankind, must be at all times essentially the same, the differences consisting simply in greater or less rapidity. Hence this great experience proves the absurdity of attempting to improvise a complete plan for Reorganising Society down to its smallest details.

Confirmation of this conclusion, if needed, would be furnished by observing the growth of the Negative Doctrine among the People It is, manifestly, nothing but the general development and complete application of the individual Right of Private Judgment asserted, in principle, by Protestantism. Now, two centuries almost were needed before all the main consequences of this doctrine were deduced, and its theory formed. No doubt the resistance of the Catholic-Feudal System has greatly influenced the slowness of its advance Evidently, this could not have been the only cause, the slow progress was largely due to the nature of the work Now, what is true of a negative doctrine should *a fortiori* be true of one truly organic

We must, therefore, conclude from this first class of considerations that, down to the present time, the People have not comprehended the great work of Social Reorganisation

Endeavouring then to ascertain in what precise way the nature of this work has been misconceived, we find that the error consists in regarding an enterprise which is essentially Theoretical, as purely Practical.

Both Theory and Practice are needed to reorganise Society

The formation of any plan for Social Organisation necessarily embraces two series of works, as distinct in their objects as in the kind of capacity they demand. One, Theoretical or

Spiritual, aims at developing the leading conception of the plan—that is to say, the new principle destined to co-ordinate social relations—and at forming the system of general ideas, fitted to guide Society. The other, Practical or Temporal, decides upon the distribution of authority, and the combination of administrative institutions best adapted to the spirit of the system already determined by the Theoretical labours Since the second series reposes on the first, of which it is only the result and realisation, the general enterprise must necessarily begin with the former. It constitutes its soul and, although merely preliminary, forms its most important and difficult portion.

The People have neglected the Theoretical aspect

In consequence of their having overlooked this fundamental distinction, or, in other words, of having exclusively fixed their attention on the Practical side, the People have naturally been led to conceive Social Reorganisation in accordance with the defective doctrine which we have examined in the previous Introduction All their errors flow from this profound original aberration, and their derivation from it is easily shown

In the first place, owing to this infraction of a natural law of the human mind, the People, while imagining that they were constructing a New Social System, really continued in the track of the Old one This was unavoidable, since the aim and spirit of the New one were left undetermined So it must ever be until this indispensable condition has become fulfilled

Every social system, whether constructed for a handful of men or for several millions, aims definitively at directing all special forces towards a general result, for the exercise of a general

and combined activity is the essence of *society.* On every other hypothesis, there is merely an agglomeration of a certain number of persons upon the same soil It is this which distinguishes human society from that of other gregarious animals.

Hence it follows that the clear and precise ascertainment of the active Aim constitutes the first and most important condition of a true social order, since this fixes the true meaning of the system

On the other hand, a society, however numerous it may be, can, just as an individual, propose to itself only one of two possible active Aims These are, a violent action upon the rest of the human race, that is to say, conquest, and an action upon Nature, modifying it for the advantage of Man, or production Every society which is not definitely organised for one or other of these aims, must be a mongrel one, devoid of character The Military aim characterised the Old System, while the Industrial aim characterises the Modern one

The first step needed for Social Reorganisation was, therefore, to proclaim this New Aim. Since this was not done, we have not abandoned the Old System, even when seeming to diverge from it most widely Now, this strange deficiency in our so-called constitutions has, clearly, sprung from the desire to organise a system in detail, before the ensemble had been conceived In other words, it was the consequence of having directed attention exclusively to the Practical side of the Reorganisation, without having first decided on the Theoretical part, or even thought of constituting it

As a necessary consequence of this primitive error, mere modifications of the Old System have been mistaken for a complete transformation Its

substance has remained essentially unchanged; all the alterations made bearing on the form alone. The only aim has been a redistribution of the old Powers and an opposition between different branches Discussions bearing upon this object have been, and still are, regarded as the perfection of politics, though in truth they constitute only a very subordinate detail The direction of Society and the nature of the social powers have been conceived as being still the same

Moreover, it is essential to point out that these mere discussions on the distribution of Powers, have, by a further consequence of the original error, been as superficial as possible. For no account has been taken of that capital division into Spiritual and Temporal Powers, which was the chief improvement introduced by the Old System into general Politics Attention having been wholly directed to the Practical side of Social Reorganisation, men have naturally adopted the absurd notion of a Constitution devoid of a Spiritual Power, which, if it could last, would in truth be a retrograde step leading to barbarism The Temporal aspect has been alone considered Nothing has been regarded but the division into legislative and executive powers, and this evidently forms a subdivision only

In order to guide their intelligence through the modified phases of the Catholic-Feudal System, the People were necessarily obliged to assume as organic those negative principles which helped them to struggle against the Old System from the time when its decline became evident, and which, therefore, were destined to modify it We must not omit to observe that, while overlooking the separation of Theory from Practice as a part of the general scheme of Re-

organisation, the People have involuntarily verified the necessity for this law, as resulting from the very nature of things, by themselves conforming to it in their efforts to modify the Old System.

Such is the strict concatenation of consequences, resulting from the fundamental error of treating as simply a matter of Practice that labour of Social Reorganisation which is in its essence Theoretical. In this way, the People have gradually come to regard as a truly regenerated social system, as the final outcome of a perfected civilisation, that which is only the Old System, deprived of all that gave it vigour and reduced to the miserable state of an emaciated skeleton Such is the true origin of the fundamental errors pointed out in the preceding Introduction.

Since the want of a true Reorganisation always makes itself apparent and must do so until it has been satisfied, the spirit of the People is agitated and exhausts itself in seeking new combinations. But being inflexibly confined within the narrow circle where their erroneous course originally placed them, and from which Civilisation vainly urges their departure, the People imagine they can reach the goal of their efforts through fresh modifications of the Old System, and still more complete applications of the Negative Doctrine Thus from change to change, that is to say, by destroying more and more completely the Catholic-Feudal System, but without replacing it, the People rapidly advance towards complete anarchy, which is the only natural issue of such a course

Theory and Practice must be separated

This conclusion evidently proves the urgent and unavoidable necessity for adopting in the great work of Social Reorganisation the plan so clearly pointed out by the nature of the human intellect It constitutes the only means of es-

caping from the disastrous consequences with which the People are threatened, in consequence of having pursued a different course

This proposition being of fundamental importance for determining the true direction of the great political operations needed in our time, it cannot be rendered too clear. It is, therefore, useful, briefly, to repeat the direct philosophical considerations on which it is based, although it may be regarded as sufficiently established by the foregoing investigation of the erroneous course hitherto pursued by the People.

It does little honour to the human intellect, to be obliged to prove that a separation universally recognised as indispensable in the cases of least perplexity, is indispensable as regards the most general and difficult of undertakings We admit as an elementary truth that the direction of any manufacture, the making of a road or bridge, the navigation of a vessel, etc., must be guided by antecedent theoretical knowledge Yet it is supposed that the Reorganisation of Society can be confided to merely Practical men

Each complete human operation, from the simplest to the most complicated, whether executed by an individual or by a multitude, is unavoidably composed of two portions, in other words, gives rise to two kinds of considerations, one Theoretical, another Practical, one concerning the conception, another the execution The former necessarily precedes the latter which it is destined to guide. In other words, all action presupposes antecedent speculation Even in operations seemingly of the most routine character, this analytic process is observable, the difference being only in the correct or erroneous nature of the theory The man who pretends, whatsoever the subject may be, to emancipate himself

from theories, as is well known, merely refuses to admit the theoretical advances effected by his contemporaries, and upholds antiquated theories long since superseded. Thus, for example, those who affect to disbelieve in medicine generally abandon themselves with stupid eagerness to the grossest charlatanism

In the earliest infancy of the human mind, Theoretical and Practical labours are executed by the same person for all operations, yet this circumstance, while rendering the distinction less evident, does not affect its reality. Soon, however, these two classes of operations begin to disengage themselves, as demanding different, and in some respects contrasted, capacities and training As the collective and individual intelligence of the human race develops itself, this separation becomes more and more pronounced and general, and constitutes the source of new advances. The degree of a nation's civilisation, philosophically considered, may be really measured by the extent to which Theory and Practice have been separated and harmonised For the grand instrument of Civilisation consists in the Division of Labour and the Combination of Efforts

By the definitive establishment of Christianity, the separation of Theory and Practice was systematically and completely effected in relation to the general action of society, as it had already been in relation to all special operations It was vivified and consolidated by the creation of a Spiritual Power, distinct and independent of the Temporal Power, and which maintained towards the latter the natural attitude of a Theoretical towards a Practical authority, modified, of course, by the special character of the Old System This great and beautiful conception was the principal cause of the admirable vigour and consistency which

distinguished the Catholic-Feudal system during its flourishing period The inevitable decline of this system has, for the moment, obscured this important distinction The superficial and negative philosophy of the last century misconceived its importance But it is evident that the distinction should be carefully preserved, as well as all the other acquisitions which the human intellect effected under the influence of the Old System, and which cannot perish with it. It should occupy the first rank, and govern the Spiritual and Temporal Powers of another sort in the System which must be established in our day Doubtless, society ought not to be organised with less completeness in the nineteenth century than it was in the eleventh [1]

Now, if the necessity for the separation of Theory and Practice demands recognition as regards political operations of daily and ordinary occurrence, how much more must this division, based as it chiefly is on the weakness of the human intellect, be called for in so vast an operation as that of the total Reorganisation of Society It constitutes, in fact, the first condition for treating this great question in a way adequate to its importance

The indications of philosophical observation are confirmed by direct experience. No important innovation has ever been effected in the order of Society, until the practical efforts which were its immediate object had been prepared by adequate conceptions, fitted to guide and support the former History furnishes two decisive confirmations of this truth

The first of these relates to the formation of

[1] This great question of the Separation of the Spiritual and Temporal Powers will form hereafter the subject of a special essay

the Catholic-Feudal System, an event which should be to us a source of inexhaustible instruction The ensemble of the institutions which in the eleventh century constituted this system had manifestly been prepared by theoretical labours, which date from the elaboration of Christianity by the School of Alexandria. The establishment of the Papacy, as the supreme European authority, was the necessary consequence of this antecedent development of Christian doctrine The general institution of Feudalism, based on reciprocal duties of obedience and protection between the weak and the strong, was, in like manner, only the application of this doctrine to the regulation of social relations incident to the state of Civilisation at that time. Who can fail to see that neither of these institutions could have been founded without the preceding development of the Christian theory?

The second confirmation, still more obvious, since it almost falls under our own eyes, is furnished by the progress of the modifications which the People have introduced into the Old System, since the commencement of the existing crisis It is manifest that they have been entirely based upon the development and systematic arrangement which the philosophy of the eighteenth century imparted to negative principles These labours, although, being negative, they were of subordinate importance, had so decidedly a Theoretical character and were so distinct from the subsequent Practical labours, that not one of the men who contributed thereto, formed any clear or enlarged idea of the modifications which they might produce in the following generation This reflection ought to have struck any person who has attentively compared their works with the succeeding changes. Yet, if in the writings

and discourses of even the ablest men who laboured in framing our pretended constitutions, the ideas directly borrowed from the philosophers of the eighteenth century were suppressed, the residue would amount to very little.

The question now before us, if considered from the historical point of view, may be easily decided by the following considerations which we merely indicate, intending to develop them hereafter.

In our day Society is disorganised under both Spiritual and Temporal aspects. Spiritual anarchy has preceded and engendered temporal anarchy. In the present epoch, the social malady depends much more on the first than on the second cause. On the other hand, an attentive study of the progress of Civilisation proves that the Spiritual is now more completely prepared than the Temporal Reorganisation of Society. Thus, our first efforts to terminate the Revolutionary Epoch should aim at reorganising the Spiritual Power, yet, hitherto, attention has only been fixed upon the remodelling of the Temporal Power.

The preceding considerations manifestly enforce the necessity of separating the Theoretical and Practical operations required for our Social Reorganisation in the present day, in other words, of conceiving and executing the operations which concern the spirit of the new social order and the corresponding system of general ideas, in contradistinction to those which affect social relations and administrative results Nothing essential and durable can be effected in Practice until the Theory is elaborated, or, at least, far advanced To proceed differently would be like building without a foundation; putting form before the substance; in a word, perpetuating the fundamental error committed by the People This, as we have just seen, is the prime source

of all their aberrations, the obstacle above all to be overcome, with a view to the Reorganisation of Society on a plan fitted to the existing state of knowledge.

Having established the nature of the preliminary labours which must be executed in order to place the organisation of the New Social System upon a solid foundation, it is easy to determine what are the Social Forces destined to fulfil this important mission. This remains to be settled before we explain the scheme which has to be worked out.

The class of Legists is incompetent for Social Reorganisation

Having now demonstrated that the mode of proceeding adopted by the People is radically wrong, it would, doubtless, be superfluous to insist much on the truth that the men to whom this great work was confided were absolutely incompetent. The People having misconceived the nature of the work, they could not but deceive themselves in the choice of the men destined to execute it. The very fitness of the men chosen for the work, as conceived by the People, rendered them unfit to direct it in the way that it ought to be conceived. The incapacity of these representatives, or rather their incompetence, has then been what might be expected, since no one is competent to fulfil two offices of essentially opposite nature.

The class of Legists has chiefly furnished the men selected to direct the elaboration of the so-called constitutions established by the people during the last thirty years. Naturally, and necessarily, they have been invested with this function, as hitherto conceived.

In fact, since the People merely sought to modify the Old System, and the negative principles destined f ide such modifications were

established, the power of eloquence was the force specially needed for the work, and Legists have habitually cultivated it. This sort of ability, though of subordinate importance, since it is merely adapted to secure the triumph of any given view without reference to its formation and reasons, is for that very reason eminently fit for propagandism The principles of the negative philosophy were not elaborated by Legists, but by Metaphysicians, who, besides, constitute spiritually the class which corresponds to that of Legists under temporal aspects These principles, however, have been propagated by Legists They occupied, for the most part, the political arena during the struggle with the Catholic-Feudal System On them, therefore, naturally devolved the task of instituting the modifications needed to bring this system into harmony with the negative philosophy, which they alone were accustomed to apply

Manifestly, the case is no longer the same as regards those organic operations, the urgency of which has been demonstrated The active employment of eloquence or the power of persuasion is no longer specially called for, but reasoning or the faculty which investigates and co-ordinates Legists are generally endowed with the largest share of ability under the first head; but for that very reason, they are the least capable as regards the second Professing to discover the method of recommending any opinion whatever, the more practised they are in this sort of work, the more unfit they become to co-ordinate a theory according to its true principles

Here, then, is no mere question of self-esteem, the entire question resolves itself into the necessary and exclusive relation which subsists between

each sort of capacity and each kind of work Legists directed the formation of the Plan of Reorganisation when this was conceived in a manner wholly erroneous. They have done their appropriate work Invited to modify and criticise, they did modify and criticise It would be unjust to reproach them with the faults of a direction which they did not choose, and the rectification of which does not belong to them As long as the direction was useful and even indispensable, so also was their ascendancy But at the same time, we should recognise the necessity for the disappearance of this influence, when an opposite direction ought to prevail No pretension can be more absurd than that of aiming at the Reorganisation of Society on a purely Practical basis, and without first executing the indispensable Theoretical works But a still greater absurdity would be the singular hope of effectuating a true reorganisation, by an assembly of orators, strangers to every positive theoretical conception, and selected, without regard to any definite condition of capacity, by men who are, for the most part, still more incompetent [1]

[1] I am far from drawing the inference that the class of Legists ought no longer to follow any political career. I only wish to prove that their action should take a different course.

According to the views just put forward, the present condition of Society requires that the supreme direction of intelligence should cease to appertain to Legists; but they are not the less called by their vocation to second, in some very important ways, that new general direction which others must originate In the first place, possessing as they do, more than any other class, the means of persuasion and the habit of placing themselves at the political point of view, they should powerfully concur in the propagation of the Organic Doctrine. In the second place, the Legists, and

The formation of Social Theory must be entrusted to Men of Science

The nature of the works to be executed, of itself sufficiently indicates the class on which their execution must devolve Since these works are Theoretical, it is clear that those whose professed aim it is to form theoretical combinations, in other words, Scientific Thinkers occupied with the study of the Sciences of Observation, are the only men whose capacity and intellectual culture fulfil the necessary conditions. It would be evidently abnormal, when the most urgent social needs call for a general work of the highest order of importance and difficulty, to entrust this work to any but the greatest intellectual forces we can command, and to men who pursue a method whose superiority is universally recognised. Doubtless, in other branches of society men may be found equal and even superior in Theoretical capacity to that of the majority of men of science, for the effective classification of individuals is far from conforming universally to the natural or physiological classification. But in a work so essential, we must consider classes and not individuals. Besides, even as regards such exceptional instances, education, that is to say, the system of intellectual habits which results from the study of the Sciences of Observation, can alone develop their natural Theoretical capacity In a word, whenever society requires Theoretical work of any given sort, it is conceded that this must

especially such among them as have profoundly studied positive law, exclusively possess the capacity for making regulations, one of the great capacities necessary to the formation of the New Social System, and one that will be utilised as soon as the purely spiritual portion of the general work of Reorganisation has been terminated, or even sufficiently advanced.

be confided to the corresponding class of Scientific Men Hence it devolves on the whole of the scientific class to guide the general Theoretical work, the necessity for which has been demonstrated [1]

Besides, the nature of the case forbids any mistake on this head, since liberty of choice is absolutely interdicted for several reasons, which point to the scientific class as the only one qualified to execute the Theoretical labour of Social Reorganisation

[1] In accordance with ordinary practice, we include in the scientific class men who, though not devoting their lives to the special cultivation of any of the Sciences of Observation, possess a scientific capacity and have studied all the positive sciences sufficiently to become penetrated with their spirit, and familiar with the principal laws that regulate natural phenomena.
Without doubt, the active formation of the new social doctrine is essentially reserved for this class of Thinkers, hitherto too rare, The other men of science are too much preoccupied with their special pursuits, and even still too much affected by certain erroneous intellectual habits, resulting from this speciality, to allow of their being really active in establishing political science But they will nevertheless fulfil, though passively, a most important office in this great elaboration, as natural judges of the work The results obtained by the men who follow out the new philosophical direction will have neither value nor influence until adopted by the specialists, as possessing the same character as their own works

I have thought it necessary to offer this explanation, in order to meet an objection which naturally presents itself to the majority of readers It is, however, evident that this distinction between two sections of the scientific world, one actively, and the other passively, engaged in elaborating the Organic Doctrine, is wholly secondary and in no wise affects the essential proposition laid down in the text

Scientific Men and Industrial Leaders will constitute the new Spiritual and Temporal Powers

In the system to be constituted the Spiritual Power will be confided to the hands of Men of Science, while the Temporal Power will belong to the heads of Industrial works. These two powers, then, should naturally proceed to the formation of this system; just as they will, when it is established, undertake its daily application; due allowance being made *for the superior importance of the work now to* be executed This work embraces a Spiritual portion which ought to be treated first, and a Temporal portion which will follow. Accordingly, on the Men of Science devolves the task of undertaking the first series of works, and on the Leaders of Industry that of organising, on the bases thus established, the administrative system. Such is the simple course indicated by the nature of things, which teaches us that the very classes which form the elements of the Powers of a New System, and must one day be placed at its head, can alone create it because they alone are capable of truly apprehending its spirit, and are alone impelled in this direction by the combined force of their habits and their interests.

Another consideration places in a still clearer light the necessity for confiding to the cultivators of Positive Science the Theoretical labour of Reorganising Society

Men of Science alone possess the needful moral Authority

In the Introduction to this Essay it has been remarked that the Negative Doctrine encourages in most minds, and increasingly strengthens, the habit of setting themselves up as the supreme judges of general political conceptions This anarchical state of intellect, when erected into a fundamental principle, is a manifest obstacle to the Reorganisation of Society. The thinkers

really competent to construct the true Organic Doctrine destined to end the existing crisis would, therefore, labour in vain unless, from their antecedent position, their authority was really recognised Deprived of this condition, and subjected to the capricious control of a policy of inspiration, their work could never be uniformly adopted Now, casting our eye over society, we shall soon perceive that this spiritual influence in our day lies exclusively in the hands of the Men of Science They alone, as regards Theory, exercise an uncontested authority Thus, apart from their being alone competent to form the new Organic Doctrine, they are exclusively invested with the moral force essential to secure its recognition The obstacles to such recognition presented by the negative prejudice which attributes a moral sovereignty to each individual as his inborn right would be insurmountable by any other than that class They possess the only leverage capable of overthrowing this prejudice, in the habit gradually contracted by society, since the foundation of the positive sciences, of submitting to the decisions of the scientific class, as regards all special theoretical ideas This habit the men of science will easily extend to general theoretical conceptions, as soon as they undertake their co-ordination.

Thus the Scientific Class in our day possesses, to the exclusion of all other classes, the two fundamental elements of Spiritual Government, Capacity and Authority in matters of Theory

Lastly, one other essential characteristic, which, like the above, exclusively belongs to Scientific Power, calls for notice

The problem is really a European one

The existing crisis is manifestly common to the several nations of Western Europe, although all do not

participate in it to the same degree. Nevertheless, it is treated by each of them as if it were purely national Yet it is evident that a European crisis demands a European treatment.

This isolation of the nations forms a necessary consequence of the fall of the Catholic-Feudal System, followed by the dissolution of the Spiritual bonds which this system had established among the people of Europe, and which it has been vainly sought to replace by a state of reciprocal hostility, disguised under the name of a European Balance of Power The negative doctrine is incapable of restoring the harmony it destroyed, with its old fundamental principle, on the contrary, it postpones its realisation. In the first place, the negative philosophy, by its very nature, tends to isolation, in the second place, the nations cannot come to a complete understanding on the principles of that philosophy, because each of them endeavours to modify the Old System by its instrumentality, in a different degree

The true Organic Doctrine can alone produce the harmony so imperatively demanded by the condition of European civilisation This doctrine should, perforce, realise it, by offering to the nations of Western Europe the system of social organisation adapted for all, and which they will enjoy in its completeness, sooner or later, according to the special state of their intelligence Besides, it should be observed that this harmony will be more perfect than that produced by the Old System, where it only subsisted under the Spiritual aspect, while in our day it should equally subsist under the Temporal aspect, so that the nations are invited to constitute, in a complete and permanent manner, a true and general social organisation And, in truth, if such an investigation were in its right place here, it would be easy to show that

each of the nations of Western Europe is, by the special character of its civilisation, placed in the most favourable position for forwarding some part or other of the general system, whence the immediate advantage of their co-operation becomes evident But this consideration proves that all European nations alike should work in common to found the New System

The European functions of Men of Science

Considering the new Organic Doctrine under this point of view, it is manifest that the force destined to shape and establish it, having to produce the combination of the different civilised nations, should be a European power. Now this office forms, no less than the others already enumerated, the special attribute of the scientific power It is clear that Scientific Men alone constitute a really compact and active body, all of whose members throughout Europe have a mutual understanding, and communicate easily and continuously among themselves This springs from the fact that they alone, in our day, possess common ideas, a uniform language, a general and permanent aim. No other class possesses these powerful advantages, because no other fulfils the above conditions in their integrity The industrial classes even, so eminently disposed to union by the character of their labours and habits, are still too much influenced by the hostile inspirations of a savage patriotism to allow of their establishing, as yet, a real European alliance among themselves Such a result is reserved for the active labours of scientific men

It is, doubtless, superfluous to demonstrate that the existing relations of Scientific Men must acquire a far greater intensity when they direct their general efforts towards the formation of the new social doctrine This result must follow, since

the force of the social tie is necessarily proportionate to the importance of the aim sought by association

In order to appreciate aright and in its entire extent the value of this European force which appertains to the scientific class, it is requisite to compare the conduct of Kings with that of the People in relation to this matter

It has been observed above that Kings, while adopting a plan absurd in principle, pursue its execution much more methodically than the People, because the course they follow is prescribed by the past in the greatest detail Thus, under the aspect which we are considering, the Kings throughout Europe combine their efforts while the Nations remain isolated By this circumstance alone, the Kings obtain a relative advantage over the People, who have no corresponding way of combating such combination, which thus becomes of extreme importance

The leaders of opinion among the People have no other resource than to exclaim against such a superiority of position, which not the less exists They proclaim, as a general proposition, that the different States have no right to interfere in the social reforms of each other Now, this principle, which is nothing but the application of the negative doctrine to external relations, is, like the other dogmas that compose it, absolutely false , like them, it is only the vicious generalisation of a transitory fact—namely, the dissolution of the relations which, under the Old System, grew up between the European nations It is clear that the nations of Western Europe, by the common character and close associations of their civilisation, both as regards its gradual development and its actual condition, constitute one great community, the members of which possess reciprocal

rights, less extended, no doubt, but of the same nature with those belonging to the different portions of a single State

Moreover we see that this negative conception, even if true, does not promote but rather hinders its end, since it tends to prevent the nations from uniting As one force can only be restrained by another, the Nations, regarded from a European point of view, will manifestly continue subordinate to their Kings, until the Scientific Power, which alone possesses a European character, presides over the great work of Social Reorganisation This force alone can furnish to the people the true counterpoise to the Holy Alliance, making due allowance for the necessary superiority of a Spiritual over a purely Temporal coalition.

Summary of preceding considerations

To sum up, then,—the necessity for confiding to Scientific Men the preliminary theoretical labours recognised as indispensable for Reorganising Society is firmly based upon four distinct considerations, each of which would have sufficed to establish it. (1) scientific men are by the character of their intellectual capacity and cultivation alone competent to execute these works, (2) from the nature of the case this office is reserved for them as constituting the Spiritual Power of the system to be organised; (3) they exclusively possess the moral authority requisite in our day to determine the adoption of the new organic doctrine when formed, (4) and, lastly, of all the social forces in existence that of scientific men is alone European Such a combination of proofs should, without doubt, place the great theoretic mission of scientific men beyond question and controversy.

From all that precedes, it follows that the fundamental errors committed by the People in their mode of conceiving the Reorganisation of

Society are, in the first instance, referable to the mistaken course which they have adopted for attaining this end, that the error of this course consists in treating Social Reorganisation as a purely Practical operation, though it is essentially Theoretical, that the nature of things and the experience of history demonstrate the absolute necessity of dividing the entire work of Reorganisation into two series, one Theoretic, the other Practical, of which the former should be first executed and serve as basis to the latter, that the preliminary execution of the Theoretical works demands the exertion of a new social force, distinct from those which have hitherto occupied the scene but have become entirely inadequate, finally, that for various decisive reasons this new force should appertain to Scientific Men devoted to the Sciences of Observation

Politics must be made Scientific

The ensemble of these views may be regarded as intended to lead reflecting minds to that elevated point of view, whence both the vices of the course hitherto followed for the Reorganisation of Society and the character of that which should in our day be adopted may be embraced at a single glance In the last resort, all resolves itself into establishing, through the combined efforts of European men of science, a positive Theory in Politics, distinct from Practice, and one which shall bring our social system into harmony with the present state of knowledge Pursuing this course of reflection, we shall perceive that the above conclusions may be resumed in a single conception · *scientific men ought in our day to elevate politics to the rank of a science of observation*

Such is the culminating and definitive point of view at which we should place ourselves. From this point of view, it is easy to condense into a series of very simple considerations the substance

of all that has been said in the present Essay It remains to effect this important generalisation, which can alone supply the means of advancing further by rendering the march of thought more rapid

Law of the Three Intellectual States

From the nature of the human intellect each branch of knowledge, in its development, is necessarily obliged to pass through three different theoretical states · the Theological or fictitious state , the Metaphysical or abstract state , lastly, the Scientific or positive state

In the First state, supernatural ideas serve to connect the small number of isolated observations which then constitute science In other words, the facts observed are explained, that is to say, conceived *a priori*, by means of invented facts Such is the necessary state of all knowledge in its infancy. With all its imperfections, this forms the only mode of connecting facts possible at that epoch It furnishes, therefore, the only instrument by means of which we can reason on facts, thus sustaining our intellectual activity which, above all, requires a rallying point In a word, this state is indispensable as a condition of further progress

The Second state is simply destined to serve as a means of transition from the First to the Third It has a mongrel nature, connecting facts by ideas which are no longer entirely supernatural and have not yet become completely natural In a word, these ideas are personified abstractions, which the mind can, at will, regard as the mystic name for a supernatural cause, or the abstract statement of a single series of phenomena, according as it approximates more nearly to the Theological or the Scientific state This Metaphysical state presupposes that facts, having become more numerous, have at the same time become more closely connected by increased analogies

The Third is the definitive state of all knowledge whatsoever, the first two having been destined to prepare it gradually The facts are now connected by general ideas or laws of a completely positive kind, suggested or confirmed by the very facts, being themselves frequently only simple facts sufficiently general to be elevated to the rank of principles We constantly endeavour to reduce these to the smallest possible number, yet without proposing any hypothesis incapable of being sooner or later verified, and always regarding these principles simply as a general mode of stating the phenomena

Men familiar with the progress of the sciences can easily verify the truth of this general historical summary in reference to the four fundamental sciences already rendered positive, Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, and Physiology, as well as their dependent sciences Even those who have only considered the sciences in their present state can make this verification as to Physiology which, although it has at last become as positive as the other sciences, still subsists under the three states in different classes of intelligence This fact is particularly evident in reference to the phenomena specially called *moral* for these are conceived by some as the result of a continuous supernatural action, by others as incomprehensible results of the action of an abstract entity; and, lastly, by others as connected with organic conditions susceptible of demonstration, and beyond which it is impossible to go

Verification of this Law in Politics

Considering Politics as a science, and applying to it the preceding remarks, we find that it has already passed through the first two states and is now on the point of reaching the third

The doctrine of Kings represents the Theological

state of Politics It is on theological ideas that this doctrine is really based. It exhibits social relations as resting on the supernatural idea of Divine Right It explains the successive political changes of the human race by an immediate supernatural guidance, exercised continuously from the first man to the present day In this way alone was political science conceived until the Old System began to decline

The doctrine of the People expresses the Metaphysical conception of Politics It is wholly founded on the abstract and metaphysical hypothesis of a primitive Social Contract, antecedent to all development of the human faculties by Civilisation The instruments of reasoning which it habitually employs are "rights," regarded as natural and common to all men in the same degree and guaranteed by this contract Such is the primitive negative doctrine, originally drawn from theology as a means of warfare against the Old System, but which has been subsequently erected into an organic idea Rousseau was its chief systematiser, in a work[1] which served, and still serves, as the basis of the ordinary reflections upon social organisation.

Lastly, the Scientific Doctrine of Politics considers the social state in which the human race has always been found by observers as the necessary effect of its organisation It conceives the object of this social state as determined by the rank which man holds in the system of Nature, the result of facts which are not themselves susceptible of explanation It perceives, in truth, that from this fundamental relation results the constant tendency of Man to act upon Nature, in order to modify it for his own advantage It then considers the social order as aiming at a collective

[1] [*Le Contrat Social*, published 1762]

development of this natural tendency, so as to give the highest possible efficiency to this useful action That being granted, it endeavours, by direct observations on the Collective Development of the race, to deduce from the fundamental laws of the human organisation the evolution it has undergone, and the intermediate states through which it has passed before reaching its definitive state Guided by that series of observations, this doctrine regards the improvements reserved for each epoch as necessitated, without resorting to any hypothesis, by the stage of development which the human race had reached Thus, in reference to each stage of Civilisation, it views political combinations as merely intended to facilitate natural tendencies, when these have been sufficiently ascertained

Such is the spirit of the Positive Doctrine which it is important to establish in our day, applying it to the present state of civilised man, and considering antecedent states only so far as may be necessary in order to establish the fundamental laws of the Science

Before Politics could become scientific, (1) the preceding Sciences had to be established and (2) the Old System had to reach its last stage

It is easy to explain at once why Politics could not sooner become a positive science, and why at the present time it is destined to become one

Two fundamental conditions, distinct yet inseparable, were indispensable for that object

In the first place, it was essential that all the special Sciences should have successively become positive, for the whole could not acquire that character so long as the elements were devoid of it This condition is now fulfilled

The Sciences have become positive, one after the other, in the natural order of effecting this revolu-

tion This order is that of the greater or less degree of complication in their phenomena, or, in other words, of their more or less intimate connection with Man Thus, at first, Astronomical phenomena, as the simplest, and then in succession, Physics, Chemistry, and Physiology, have been reduced to positive theories, the last of these only quite recently. The same reform could not be accomplished for Politics until it had been effected for the other phenomena, since political phenomena depend upon these and are, therefore, the most complicated of all But if this renovation could not be effected sooner, its realisation now has become an evident necessity

In the second place, it was essential that the Preparatory Social System, during which action upon Nature was only the indirect object of Society, should have reached its last stage

On one hand, the true Theory could not arise until then, because it would have been too far in advance of Practice The former, being destined to guide the latter, could not precede it too long On the other hand, it could not have obtained a sufficient experimental basis earlier. It was requisite that a system of social order should have been founded, accepted by a very large population, embracing several important nations, and lasting for a long period, before a theory could be founded upon this vast experience

The second of these conditions is now satisfied no less than the first The Theological system, destined to prepare the human mind for the Scientific one, has arrived at the end of its career This is undeniable, since the Metaphysical system, the only object of which is to subvert the Theological one, has, generally speaking, obtained a preponderance among the nations A Scientific Politics must therefore arise, for, some theory being

indispensable, we should otherwise be driven to assume the reconstitution of Theological Politics; the Metaphysical doctrine being, strictly speaking, not a true theory, but a negative doctrine suitable only for a transition

To sum up—no moral revolution ever existed at once more inevitable, more ripe, and more urgent than that required to elevate Politics to the rank of the natural sciences, through the combined efforts of European men of science This revolution can alone introduce into the great crisis of our day a really preponderating force, capable of preserving society from the terrible anarchical explosions which threaten it, by putting it on the track of that improved social system which the state of our knowledge demands

Three Series of Works needed for the Reorganisation of Society

In order to set in motion with the utmost possible promptitude the scientific forces destined to fulfil this salutary mission, it was essential to lay down the general prospectus of the Theoretical works required for the Reorganisation of Society, by raising Politics to the rank of the natural sciences I have ventured to conceive this plan which I now formally submit to the scientific thinkers of Europe

I am profoundly convinced that when this discussion begins, my plan, be it adopted or rejected, will necessarily lead to the formation of the final plan I therefore do not hesitate, in the interests of society, now threatened with long and terrible convulsions which their intervention can alone avert, to adjure all the European men of science to express, freely and publicly, their well-considered judgment upon the general scheme of constructive operations which I submit to them.

This prospectus embraces Three Series of W[illegible]

The First Series aims at forming a System of Historical Observations upon the general progress of the human intellect, destined to become the positive basis of Politics, thus wholly freeing it from a Theological and Metaphysical character and impressing on it a Scientific character.

The Second Series seeks to establish a complete system of Positive Education, adapted to a regenerated society constituted with a view to action upon Nature, in other words, it aims at perfecting such action, so far as this depends upon the faculties of the agent.

Lastly, the Third Series embraces a general exposition of the Collective Action which civilised men, in the present state of their knowledge, can exercise upon Nature, so as to modify it for their own advantage, directing their entire forces to this end, and regarding social combinations only as means of attaining it.

FIRST SERIES OF WORKS

The common characteristic of Theology and Metaphysics is the predominance of Imagination over Observation

THE fundamental condition which must be fulfilled in order to treat Politics in a positive spirit, consists in determining the precise limits within which, by the nature of things, the combinations of social order are contained In other words, it is necessary in Politics, as in the other sciences, that the offices of Observation and of Imagination should be rendered perfectly distinct, and the latter subordinated to the former.

In order to place this leading conception in a clear light, it is necessary to compare the general

spirit of Positive Politics[1] with that of Theological and Metaphysical Politics. In order to simplify their comparison the two last must be considered under one head, but this cannot alter the results since, as pointed out in the preceding General View, the second is merely a modification of the first, differing from it only by having a less pronounced character

The Theological and Metaphysical states of any science possess one characteristic in common—the predominance of Imagination over Observation. The only difference which exists between them from this point of view is, that in the first the Imagination occupies itself with supernatural beings, and in the second with personified abstractions.

The necessary and constant consequence of such a state of the human mind is to persuade Man that he is, in all respects, the centre of the system of Nature, and, consequently, endowed with an indefinite control over phenomena This opinion, it is evident, results directly from the supremacy

[1] [Comte refers to the new political science under various names in the course of these Essays At first he called it Theoretical or, more commonly, Positive Politics, practical politics being the corresponding art The term, however, had the disadvantage of containing the word "politics," which was in common use and had a narrower meaning He, therefore, later speaks of Social Science and again of Social Physics—the science which bore the same relation to the phenomena of Society that Physics does to those of Inorganic Nature Finally, in a subsequent work, he introduced the term "Sociology," which has been generally accepted It will, therefore, be understood that when in this Essay he speaks of "Positive Politics," he means Social Science or Sociology So "Positive Polity" is the social organisation based on this science—S H. S]

exercised by the Imagination, combined with the natural tendency which disposes men in general to form exaggerated ideas of their importance and power. Such an illusion constitutes the most prominent characteristic of the infancy of the human reason

Science is characterised by the predominance of Observation over Imagination

Regarded from the philosophic point of view, the revolutions which have led the different sciences up to the positive state have produced the general result of inverting this primitive order of our ideas

The fundamental characteristic of these revolutions consisted in transferring to Observation the preponderance hitherto exercised by the Imagination Consequently, the results have been in like manner reversed Man has been dethroned from his central position and reduced to the rank he really occupies In the same way, his activity has been confined within its just limits, having been reduced to the office of modifying, more or less, by their interaction, a certain number of the phenomena which he is called upon to observe

The mere statement of this historical view enables all who have clear notions about the sciences which have become positive to verify it.

Thus, in Astronomy, man commenced by considering the celestial phenomena, if not as subject to his influence, at least as having direct and intimate relations with all the details of his existence Indisputable and multiplied demonstrations were needed to induce Man to accept with submission a subordinate and imperceptible position in the general system of the Universe. Similarly in Chemistry, he imagined himself competent to modify at will the intimate constitution of bodies, before he limited his efforts to observing

the reciprocal action of the different terrestrial substances, as shown in their effects. In Medicine too, it was only after having long hoped to remedy at will the disorders of his organisation, and even to resist indefinitely the causes of destruction, that man finally recognised that his action was of no avail unless it coincided with the natural working of the organisation, and still more so when opposed to this

Theological and Metaphysical Politics

Politics have not, any more than the other sciences, escaped this law, based upon the nature of things. The condition in which it has hitherto existed, and still remains, presents a perfect analogy with the relation of astrology to astronomy, of alchemy to chemistry, and of the search after a universal remedy to medicine

In the first place, it is evident, from the preceding General View, that Theological and Metaphysical Politics, considered in reference to their method, agree in giving a preponderance to Imagination over Observation It cannot, indeed, be denied that Observation has been employed in theoretical Politics, but it was so only in a subordinate manner, subject to the caprices of Imagination, as in the case of chemistry during its alchemistic phase

This predominance of the Imagination in Politics necessarily led to consequences analogous to those described above for the other sciences We can easily verify this by direct observations upon the common spirit of Theological and Metaphysical Politics, regarded from a theoretical point of view.

Absolute character of political theories hitherto

Down to the present time man has believed in the unlimited power of his political combinations to perfect social order In other words, the human race has hitherto been regarded, politically,

as unmoved by any inherent forces, and always disposed to receive passively whatever impulse the legislator, armed with sufficient authority, wished to give it

By a necessary consequence, the Absolute has always reigned and still reigns in Theoretic Politics, whether Theological or Metaphysical. The common end which they propose is to establish, each in its own way, the eternal and most perfect type of social order, without taking into account any given state of Civilisation. Both pretended to the exclusive discovery of a system of institutions capable of attaining that end. The only thing which in this respect distinguishes them is, that the former formally prohibits any important modification of the plan traced by it; while the latter permits criticism, provided this moves in the given direction That difference excepted, they are both equally absolute

This Absolute character is still more apparent in their applications to Practical Politics Each of them perceives in its peculiar system of institutions a sort of universal panacea, applicable to all political evils, of whatever nature these may be, and whatever may be the stage of Civilisation actually reached by the people for whom the remedy is destined In like manner, both judge the social systems belonging to different nations at distinct Epochs of Civilisation, in reference only to their greater or less concordance with, or opposition to, their own unvarying types of perfection Thus, to quote a recent striking example, the adherents of Theological and Metaphysical Politics have, each in their turn and at brief intervals of time, proclaimed the social organisation of Spain to be superior to that of the most advanced European nations, without paying any regard to the actual inferiority of Spanish civilisation in comparison

with that of the French and English, above whom the Spaniards have been elevated as regards this question. Such judgments, other examples of which it would be easy to cite, show clearly how entirely the spirit of Theological and Metaphysical Politics disregards the actual state of Civilisation.

To complete their characterisation, it is important to remark that they both, generally speaking, though for different reasons, agree in setting up a very imperfect state of Civilisation as the perfection of Social Reorganisation. We may even see that the most consistent adherents of Metaphysical Politics (such as its co-ordinator Rousseau) have been led to regard the social state as a degeneration from a state of Nature, the creation of their own imagination, and simply the metaphysical counterpart of the theological conception of the fall of human nature through original sin.

This survey of the subject confirms the belief that the preponderance of Imagination over Observation has produced in Political Science results exactly similar to those it engendered in the other sciences, before they were rendered positive. The Absolute search for the best possible Government, taking no account of the state of Civilisation, is evidently of the same nature as that for a panacea applicable to all maladies and all temperaments.

The general spirit of Theological and Metaphysical Politics being thus reduced to its simplest expression, we gather from the preceding remarks that it essentially resolves itself into two considerations. As regards method, it consists in the preponderance of Imagination over Observation. As regards general ideas destined to guide the operations, it consists, on one hand, in a purely abstract consideration of Social Organisation,

regarded as independent of the state of Civilisation, and, on the other hand, in viewing the progress of Civilisation as not being subject to any law

Character of Positive Politics

By reversing this process, we should necessarily discover the point of view adapted to Positive Politics, since, as above pointed out, the same opposition may be observed between the conjectural and positive state of all the other sciences By this mental operation, we shall only extend to the future the analogy observed in the past; and we are thus led to the following results

In the first place, in order to impress a positive character on Political Science, we must introduce into this, as into all other sciences, the preponderance of Observation over Imagination In the second place, that this fundamental condition may be fulfilled, we must, on one hand, conceive Social Organisation as intimately connected with the state of Civilisation and determined by it, on the other, consider the Progress of Civilisation as being subject to an invariable law based upon the nature of things Politics cannot become positive, or, what comes to the same thing, Observation cannot obtain a preponderance over Imagination, until these last two conditions shall have been fulfilled. But it is clear, inversely, that if they are fulfilled, if the Theory of Politics is consistently established on this basis, the Imagination will spontaneously become subordinated to Observation and Politics be rendered positive. Thus the final analysis reduces everything to these two conditions.

Such, then, are the two fundamental ideas that should preside over positive efforts in Theoretic Politics Having regard to their extreme importance, it is indispensable to consider them in

greater detail It is not our business to demonstrate them here, for that is precisely the object of the operations we have to accomplish. We only seek to state them with sufficient completeness, in order that competent minds may, in some degree, verify them by comparing them with facts generally known Such a verification is sufficient to convince the mind of the practicability of treating Politics in the same way as the Sciences of Observation, and our chief object will be attained if we create such a conviction

Social Organisation is determined by the state of Civilisation

Civilisation consists, strictly speaking, on the one hand, in the development of the human mind, on the other, in the result of this, namely, the increasing power of Man over Nature In other words, the component elements of Civilisation are Science, the Fine Arts, and Industry, the last expression being understood in that enlarged sense which I have always assigned to it

Regarding Civilisation from this precise and elementary point of view, it is easy to perceive that the state of the Social Organisation essentially depends on that of Civilisation and should be regarded as its result, whereas Imaginative Politics considers the former as isolated from, and even quite independent of, the latter

The state of Civilisation necessarily determines that of the Social Organisation, whether Spiritual or Temporal, under the two most important aspects In the first place, it determines its nature by fixing the aim of social action, in the next place it prescribes its essential form by creating and developing the social forces, temporal and spiritual, destined to guide this general action. In truth, it is clear that the collective action of the social body, being nothing else than the

resultant of the individual actions of all its constituent members, directed to a common end, cannot be constituted otherwise than its elements, which are manifestly determined by the more or less advanced state of the Sciences, the Fine Arts, and Industry It is still more evident that the prolonged existence of any political system is inconceivable, unless it confers supreme power on the predominant social forces, the nature of which is invariably prescribed by the state of Civilisation Reason points to this conclusion and experience confirms it

All the varieties of Social Organisation which have hitherto existed have only been modifications, more or less extensive, of a single system, the Military and Theological system The original formation of this system was the evident and necessary result of the imperfect condition of Civilisation at the epoch when it arose. When Industry was in its infancy, society adopted War as its active aim It did so naturally and reasonably, since such a condition of affairs both supplied the resources of war and enforced its practice by the most energetic stimulants that can act upon man,—the necessity for exercising his faculties and that of living In like manner, it is clear that the Theological state, which then affected all special theories, necessarily impressed the same character on the general ideas destined to serve as a social bond The third element of Civilisation—the Fine Arts—then predominated , and was in truth the chief instrument of founding this primitive organisation. Had it not developed itself, we cannot conceive how Society could have been organised.

If we next observe the successive modifications which this original system has undergone, and which metaphysicians have mistaken for so many different systems, we shall find the same

result In all of them we shall see the unavoidable effects of the increasing expansion of the Scientific and Industrial elements, at the outset so insignificant. Thus it came to pass that the passage from Polytheism to Theism, and, later, the Protestant Reformation, were chiefly produced by the continual, though slow, progress of positive knowledge , in other words, by the action exerted upon the older general conceptions, by special ideas which gradually acquired a positive character In like manner, under Temporal aspects, the transition from the Roman to the Feudal State, and, still more manifestly, the decline of the latter through the Enfranchisement of the Commons and its results, are essentially referable to the increasing importance of the Industrial element. In a word, all the general facts prove the close dependence of the Social Organisation upon the state of Civilisation.

The best thinkers, those who approximate most closely to the positive condition in Politics, now begin to perceive this fundamental principle They feel that it is absurd to conceive the political system as an isolated fact, and to attribute to it those social forces which, on the contrary, produce it In a word, they already admit that the political order is, and can only be, the expression of civil order , in other words, that the preponderating social forces, of necessity, at last become the directing ones Only one step more is needed to recognise the subordination of the political system to the state of Civilisation For if it is clear that the political order is the exponent of the civil order, it is, at least, equally apparent that the civil order itself is merely the exponent of the state of Civilisation

No doubt Social Organisation in its turn inevitably reacts on Civilisation in ways more or

less marked. But this influence which, notwithstanding its great importance, is only secondary, cannot overturn the natural order of dependence. This reaction itself, rightly considered, proves that the order is that above described. For experience always shows that if the Social Organisation be constituted in a sense at variance with the coexisting Civilisation, the latter in the end invariably gets the upper hand

It must, then, be admitted, as one of the two fundamental ideas constituting the essence of Positive Politics, that the Social Organisation, whether past or present, should not be considered apart from the state of Civilisation, whence in truth it necessarily flows If to facilitate investigation, we sometimes find it useful to consider them separately, this abstraction should always be regarded as simply provisional, without allowing ourselves to lose sight of the subordination established by the nature of things.

The growth of Civilisation follows natural Laws

The second fundamental idea is this: that Civilisation progresses according to a necessary Law.

The experience of the past proves, in the most decisive manner, that the progressive march of Civilisation follows a natural and unavoidable course, which flows from the law of human organisation, and, in its turn, becomes the supreme law of all political phenomena

In this place it is manifestly impossible to expound the law in question with precision, or to verify it historically, even in the briefest manner We only propose to offer some reflections on this fundamental conception

The first reflection points to the necessity for assuming that such a law does exist, in order to explain political phenomena

All men who possess a certain knowledge of

the leading facts of history, be their historical views what they may, will agree in this, that the cultivated portion of the human race, considered as a whole, has made uninterrupted progress in Civilisation, from the most remote periods of history to our own day In this proposition, the term Civilisation is understood in the sense explained above, including, therefore, the Social Organisation

No reasonable doubt can be raised about this fundamental fact as regards the Epoch which extends from the eleventh century to the present time, in other words, commencing with the introduction of the Sciences of Observation into Europe by the Arabs, and the Enfranchisement of the Commons But the truth is equally incontestable as regards the antecedent period Men of science are now well convinced that the pretensions to advanced scientific knowledge, put forward on behalf of the ancients by scholars, are devoid of all real basis The Arabians are proved to have surpassed them Such also has been the case, even more decidedly, as regards Industry, at all events, in reference to all that calls for real ability and does not result from mere accident Even if the Fine Arts were deemed to constitute an exception, their exclusion is susceptible of a natural explanation which would leave the main proposition essentially untouched Lastly, as regards the Social Organisation, it is perfectly manifest that this, during the same period, made the greatest progress, owing to the establishment of Christianity and the formation of the Feudal System, so superior to the organisation of Greece and Rome

It is, therefore, certain that Civilisation has, under every aspect, made constant progress

On the other hand, while discarding the dis-

paraging spirit, alike blind and unjust, introduced by the Metaphysical Philosophy, we cannot but perceive that in consequence of the state of infancy which has hitherto characterised political speculations, the practical combinations that have until now guided Civilisation were not always those best adapted to promote its progress, and, frequently, tended rather to impede than to assist this There have been epochs, the main political activity of which was of a purely stationary character Such, generally speaking, were those of social systems in their decline , those, for example, of the Emperor Julian, of Philip II and the Jesuits, and, lastly, of Bonaparte. Let us also bear in mind that, as already pointed out, the Social Organisation does not regulate the course of Civilisation, but, on the contrary, results from this.

Frequent cures, effected in spite of a treatment manifestly erroneous, have revealed to physicians the powerful action by which every living body spontaneously tends to rectify accidental derangements of its organisation. In like manner, the advance of Civilisation, notwithstanding unfavourable political combinations, clearly proves that Civilisation is governed by a natural law of progress, independent of all combinations, and dominating them If this principle were denied, in order to explain such a fact, and comprehend how it has come to pass that Civilisation, in place of being retarded by errors committed, has almost invariably profited by them, we could only have recourse to direct continuous supernatural guidance, after the fashion of Theological Politics.

Lastly, it is well to remark that, too frequently, events have been regarded as unfavourable to Civilisation which were only apparently so The chief cause of this misapprehension has been

the insufficient attention paid, even by the best thinkers, to an essential law of organised bodies, which applies with as much force to the human race acting collectively, as to a single individual It consists in the necessity for a certain degree of resistance, in order that all forces may be fully developed But this remark in no way affects the preceding consideration For though obstacles are needed to develop forces, they do not produce them.

The conclusion deduced from this fundamental consideration would be much strengthened, if we took into account the remarkable identity observable in the development of the Civilisation of different nations, between whom no political intercommunication can with probability be assumed Such an identity could only have been produced under the influence of a natural progress of Civilisation, uniformly applicable to all nations, as resulting from the fundamental laws of the human organisation, common to all Thus, for example, the customs of the early times of Greece, as they are described by Homer, are found to be almost identical with those which subsist among the savage nations of North America Similarly, the feudalism of the Malays closely resembles that of Europe in the eleventh century. These points of resemblance, it is clear, can only be explained in the way above mentioned

A second consideration will render evident the existence of a Natural Law regulating the progress of Civilisation

If, in conformity with the view above submitted, we admit that each phase of the social system is necessarily derived from that of the corresponding Civilisation, we may in our observations leave out of consideration this complex element; and the

results arrived at for the residuary facts will equally apply to the Organisation of Society.

Reducing the question, therefore, to its simplest terms, it becomes easy to perceive that Civilisation follows a determined and invariable course.

A superficial philosophy, which would make this world a scene of miracles, has immensely exaggerated the influence of Chance, that is to say, of isolated causes, in human affairs This exaggeration is peculiarly apparent in reference to the Sciences and the Arts Among other remarkable examples, everyone knows the great admiration excited even in intelligent minds by the idea that the law of universal gravitation was revealed to Newton by the fall of an apple

All sensible men in our time admit that Chance plays only a very small part in scientific and industrial discoveries, that in none but insignificant discoveries does it rank as chief agent But to this error has succeeded another which, though in itself much less unreasonable, has, nevertheless, almost the same disadvantages The office of Chance in this respect has been transferred to Genius This explanation hardly accounts more felicitously for the action of the human mind

Evolution of the Arts and Sciences

The history of human knowledge clearly proves that all our labours in the Sciences and Arts are so connected, whether in the same or in succeeding generations, that the discoveries of one age prepare those of the following, as the former had been themselves prepared by those of the preceding It has been demonstrated that the isolated power of Genius is much less than that with which it has been credited The man most justly distinguished by great discoveries almost always owes the largest share of his success to his predecessors in the same career

In a word, the human mind follows, in the development of the Sciences and Arts, a definite *course, one that transcends the greatest intellectual* forces, which arise, so to speak, only as instruments destined to produce in due course successive discoveries

Confining our observations to the Sciences whose progress we can follow most easily from remote periods, we see, in truth, that their main historic epochs,—that is to say, their passage through the Theological and Metaphysical into the Positive state,—are rigorously determined These three states succeed each other necessarily in an order prescribed by the nature of the human mind The transition from one to the other takes place according to a course, the steps of which resemble each other in all the sciences, nor can the greatest amount of Genius dispense with passing through them Turning from this general review to the subdivisions of the scientific or definitive state, we observe the same law. Thus, for example, the great discovery of universal gravitation was prepared by the labours of the astronomers and geometers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, chiefly by those of Kepler and Huygens. They were indispensable to its birth, and certain, sooner or later, to produce it

It appears, therefore, from the preceding remarks that the elementary march of Civilisation is unquestionably subject to a natural and invariable law which overrules all special human divergencies But as the state of the Social Organisation necessarily follows that of Civilisation, the same conclusion applies, whether Civilisation is considered as a whole or in its elements

The two considerations enunciated above, though insufficient to furnish a complete exposition of the progress of Civilisation, never-

theless, prove its reality They show the possibility of determining with precision all its attributes, by a careful observation of the Past, and of thus creating Positive Politics

The true limits of Political Action

Our business is next to fix exactly the practical aim of this science, and its general points of contact with the wants of society; especially its connection with the great work of Reorganisation which is so imperiously required by the actual state of the body politic.

To effect this, it is necessary at the outset to ascertain the limits of all true political action.

The fundamental law which governs the natural progress of Civilisation rigorously determines the successive states through which the general development of the human race must pass On the other hand, this law necessarily results from the instinctive tendency of the human race to perfect itself Consequently, it is as completely independent of our control as are the individual instincts, the combination of which produces this permanent tendency

Since no known fact authorises us to believe that the human organisation is liable to any fundamental alteration, the progress of that Civilisation which flows from it is in essentials unalterable. To speak more precisely, none of the intermediate steps which it prescribes can be evaded, and no truly retrograde step can be made

Nevertheless, the progress of Civilisation is more or less modifiable, and may vary in point of rapidity within certain limits, from various causes, physical and moral, which can be estimated. Among these causes are political combinations In this sense only is it possible for Man to influence the course of his own Civilisation.

This action upon the Race is quite analogous to that which is attainable in relation to the Individual; the analogy resulting from the identity of source. By employing suitable means we can, up to a certain point, accelerate or retard the expansion of an individual instinct, but we can neither destroy it nor alter its nature. Similarly with the instincts of the Race, due allowance being made for the varying extent of this modifying power when the duration of the Race is compared with that of the Individual.

The natural progress of Civilisation, therefore, determines with entire certainty for each epoch the improvements of which the social state is susceptible, whether in its parts or as a whole Such improvements alone can be carried out, as in fact they are carried out by the combinations due to philosophers and statesmen, at times even in spite of these combinations.

Influence of Great Men upon their Age

All men who have exercised a real and durable action on the human race, whether in Temporal or Spiritual matters, have been guided and sustained by this fundamental truth, which the usual instinct of genius partially revealed to them, lthough never yet systematically demonstrated They have, at every epoch, perceived what were the changes which the state of Civilisation tended to bring about These they enunciated, and proposed to their contemporaries doctrines and institutions in harmony with them. Whenever their conceptions were in accord with the real state of affairs, the changes so foreseen were speedily realised or consolidated. The new social forces, which had long been silently growing, suddenly appeared at their voice on the political scene with all the vigour of youth

History having been, up to the present time,

written and studied in a superficial spirit, such coincidences and striking results, in place of instructing men, as might be naturally supposed, have only astonished them These facts, when misapprehended, even help to keep alive the Theological and Metaphysical belief in the indefinite power of legislators over Civilisation They maintain this superstitious idea in minds otherwise disposed to reject it, were it not apparently supported by observation. This untoward result arises from the circumstance that in these great events we see only men, never the forces which irresistibly impel them. Instead of recognising the preponderating influence of Civilisation, the efforts of these far-seeing men are regarded as the true causes of the improvements effected, but which would equally have taken place, though somewhat more slowly, without their intervention No one troubles himself with considering the enormous disproportion between the alleged cause and the results, a disproportion which would make the explanation much more incomprehensible than the fact itself People look at the appearance and neglect the reality which is behind In a word, according to the ingenious expression of Madame de Stael, we mistake the actors for the drama.

Such an error is exactly of the same nature as that of the Indians who attributed to Christopher Columbus the eclipse which he had foreseen

Generally speaking, when the individual appears to exert a great influence, it is not due to his own forces, since these are extremely small Forces external to him act in his favour, according to laws over which he has no control His whole power lies in the intelligent apprehension of these laws through observation, his forecast of

their effects, and the power which he thus obtains of subordinating them to the desired end, provided he employs them in accordance with their nature. The effect once produced, ignorance of natural laws leads the spectator, and sometimes the actor himself, to attribute to the power of man what is really due only to his foresight.

These general remarks apply to Political Action in the same way, and for the same reason, as to physical, chemical, and physiological action. All political action is followed by a real and durable result, when it is exerted in the same direction as the force of Civilisation, and aims at producing changes which the latter necessitates. On every other hypothesis, it exerts no influence, or a merely ephemeral one.

The most fatal case, without doubt, is that in which the legislator, Temporal or Spiritual, assumes a retrograde attitude, whether by design or not, for he then places himself in opposition to that which alone can give him force. But the course of Civilisation so entirely regulates Political Action, that the latter is resultless, even if advancing with society, when it seeks to make more rapid progress than circumstances permit. Experience, indeed, proves that the legislator, however great may be his power, necessarily fails if he undertakes to carry out improvements which, though in harmony with the tendencies of Civilisation, are too far in advance of its actual condition. Thus, for example, the great attempts of Joseph II[1] to civilise Austria beyond what its condition permitted were as completely nullified as the vast efforts of Bonaparte to carry France back to the Feudal System; though both personages possessed the largest measure of arbitrary power.

[1] [Reigned, 1765–1790.]

It follows from the above considerations that the true politics, the Positive Politics, should no more seek to govern phenomena than the other sciences do They have abandoned this ambitious chimera, which characterised their infancy, for the simple task of observing and correlating their phenomena Political science should do the same It should employ itself exclusively in co-ordinating all the special facts relative to the progress of Civilisation, and in reducing these to the smallest possible number of general facts, the connection of which ought to manifest the natural law of this progress, leaving for subsequent appreciation the influence of the various causes which can modify its rapidity.

The practical utility of such a Political Science based on Observation may now be easily estimated

Scientific prevision can avert or mitigate violent Revolutions

A sound political system can never aim at impelling the human race, since this is moved by its proper impulse, in accordance with a law as necessary as, though more easily modified than, that of gravitation But it does seek to facilitate human progress by throwing light on its path

There is a great difference between obeying the progress of Civilisation blindly and obeying it intelligently The changes it calls for take place as much in the first as in the second case, but they are longer delayed and, above all, are only accomplished after having produced social perturbations, more or less serious, according to the nature and importance of these changes. Now, the disturbances of every kind which thus arise in the body politic, may be, in great part, avoided, by adopting measures based on an exact knowledge of the changes which tend to be produced.

Such measures consist in so ordering affairs that the anticipated ameliorations may be effected directly, instead of being produced by the sheer force of necessity, in spite of all the obstacles which ignorance engenders In other words, the essential aim of Practical Politics is, properly speaking, to avoid the violent revolutions which spring from obstacles opposed to the progress of Civilisation; and to reduce these to a simple moral movement, as regular as, though more intense than, that which gently urges society at ordinary times Now, in order to attain this end, it is manifestly indispensable that we should know, as precisely as possible, the actual tendency of Civilisation, so as to bring our political conduct into harmony with it.

It would, doubtless, be chimerical to hope that the movements which, more or less, compromise the ambitious and interested aspirations of whole classes of men, can be effected with complete calmness. But it is, nevertheless, certain that hitherto far too much importance has been given to this cause in explaining revolutionary convulsions, the violence of which has been, in great part, due to ignorance of the natural laws which regulate the progress of Civilisation

It is only too common to attribute to egotism what essentially springs from ignorance, and this mischievous error contributes to maintain irritation between men, in their private and public relations But, in the present case, is it not evident that those who have placed themselves in opposition to the course of Civilisation would not have adopted this attitude if its antagonistic character had been clearly demonstrated? No one is so foolish as knowingly to place himself in opposition to the nature of things. No one has any satisfaction in exerting an influence of

which he clearly discerns the ephemeral nature In this way, the demonstrations of a Politics based on Observation are capable of acting upon the classes whom prejudice and interest would otherwise engage in a struggle against the course of Civilisation

Doubtless, we should not exaggerate the influence exerted by the intellect over the conduct of men. But, assuredly, the force of demonstration is far more important than has hitherto been supposed The history of the human mind proves that this force alone has often decided changes, in effecting which it had to struggle with a combination of the greatest human forces. To cite only the most remarkable example, the power of scientific demonstration has alone caused the adoption of the theory of the movement of the earth Yet this had to overcome, not only the resistance of the theological power, at that period still so powerful, but, above all, the pride of the human race, supported by the most plausible arguments ever advanced in favour of an erroneous idea Experience of so decisive a kind should enlighten us as to the great power of real demonstrations The absence of such demonstrations has been the chief reason why statesmen have allowed themselves to be carried away by serious political aberrations Let demonstrations appear, and the aberrations will soon cease

Besides, even if we consider the question of interests alone, it is easy to see that Positive Politics ought to supply the means of avoiding violent revolutions

In truth, if the improvements called for by the progress of Civilisation have to struggle with some ambitious and interested aims, others of the same kind are favourable to them Besides, from the very fact that these improvements have reached

their maturity, the real forces which favour them are stronger than the opposing forces, though appearances do not always bear out this conclusion Knowledge of the Law of Progress enforces resignation and, above all, guides Action The governing classes, clearly perceiving the end which they are called on to realise, can reach it directly, in place of wasting their forces on tentative and mistaken efforts. They will, by anticipation, combine measures for overcoming opposition with others calculated to facilitate the acceptance of the new order of things by their opponents In a word, the triumph of Civilisation will operate in a manner at once as prompt and as calm as the nature of things will permit

To sum up, the course of Civilisation does not, properly speaking, advance in a straight line It is composed of a series of progressive oscillations, more or less ample or slow, on either side of a mean line, which may be compared with that presented by the mechanism of locomotion But these oscillations may be made shorter and more rapid, by political combinations based on a knowledge of the mean movement which always tends to prevail Such is the permanent practical utility of this kind of knowledge It evidently becomes more important in proportion as the changes necessitated by the course of Civilisation are themselves more momentous Its usefulness has accordingly reached its maximum in our day, since the Social Reorganisation which alone can terminate the existing crisis is, of all the revolutions which the human race ever experienced, the most comprehensive.

The fundamental datum and positive starting-point of general Practical Politics consists, therefore, in a determination of the real tendency of

Civilisation. By ascertaining this we can harmonise political action with it, and render as mild and as short as possible the crises which the human race inevitably undergoes during its successive passages through the different stages of Civilisation.

Need for studying all past Epochs of Civilisation

Persons who, though intelligent, are unfamiliar with the method which suits the human mind, and even those who see that a knowledge of the laws which regulate the progress of Civilisation can alone furnish a solid and positive basis for political combinations, may suppose that this historical investigation need not be pushed back to the origin of civilised society, but that it will suffice to consider its present condition. Such a view is natural, having regard to the narrow way in which Politics has been hitherto regarded. But its delusive character is easily shown.

Experience has proved that, so long as the human mind advances in a positive direction, there are many advantages and no inconveniences in rising to the highest degree of generality, because it is far easier to descend than to ascend the scale. In the infancy of positive Physiology it was supposed that the human organisation could be understood by studying man alone; an error completely analogous to that now under discussion. It has been since recognised that the formation of clear and large conceptions of the human organisation requires us to consider man as being a member of the animal series; and even, in a still more general point of view, as forming part of the whole system of organised bodies. Physiology has only received its definitive constitution since the comparison of the different classes of living beings has been carried out on a

large scale, and systematically employed in the study of man

In Politics the various states of Civilisation correspond to the different organisations in Physiology But the reasons which compel us to consider all the Epochs of Civilisation are still more imperative than those which have induced physiologists to institute a comparison of all organisations

No doubt a study of the present condition of Civilisation, considered apart, and independently of the states which have preceded it, may furnish very useful materials for the formation of Positive Politics, provided the facts are observed in a philosophical spirit Nay, it is certain that, by studies of this kind, true Statesmen have hitherto been enabled to modify the conjectural doctrines which guided their efforts, so as to render these less discordant with the real wants of society But it is not the less evident that such a study is totally inadequate to form a true Positive Politics. It can furnish nothing but materials In a word, the observation of the present state of Civilisation, considered by itself, can no more determine the actual tendencies of society than can the study of any other isolated epoch

The reason for this is that the existence of a law cannot be established by a single term Three terms, at least, are needed, in order that the connection ascertained by comparing the first two, and verified by the third, may serve to reveal the following ones Such prevision is the practical object of every law

When, in tracing an institution and a social idea, or a system of institutions and a complete doctrine, from their birth to their present stage, we find that, from a given epoch, their influence has always been either diminishing or increasing,

we can foretell with complete certainty the destiny which awaits them In the first case, it is proved that their tendency is at variance with that of Civilisation, and hence their final disappearance may be predicted. In the second case, on the contrary, we may conclude that they will ultimately predominate The period of their fall or triumph may even be calculated, within narrow limits, from the extent and rapidity of the variations observed Manifestly, therefore, such a study is a fruitful source of positive knowledge

But what can we learn from the observation of a single state of society, where we must embrace, at one view, doctrines, institutions, and classes, both growing and declining, without reckoning the ephemeral action which only depends on the routine of the moment? What human sagacity could avoid confounding these opposed and heterogeneous elements? How could we discover the realities which make so little noise amid the phantoms which hurry over the stage? It is clear that, amid such confusion, the observer could only advance if guided by a knowledge of the Past, for this alone can teach him to direct his view so as to see things as they really exist.

The chronological order of historical epochs is not their philosophical order In place of saying: the Past, the Present, and the Future, we should say · the Past, the Future, and the Present In truth, it is only when we have conceived the Future by the aid of the Past that we can with advantage revert to the Present, so as to seize its true character.

These considerations, though applicable to every epoch, are so, in a still higher degree, to the present. In our day three different Systems coexist in the heart of society. the Catholic-

Feudal system, the Scientific and Industrial system, and the mongrel Transitional system of metaphysicians and legists In the midst of such confusion, it is entirely beyond the grasp of the human mind to make a clear and exact analysis, or to frame real and precise statistics, of the body politic, unless it be enlightened by the Past It is demonstrable that sound intellects which, if better guided, would have risen to a truly positive Politics, have continued in a metaphysical state, because they considered the present condition of affairs apart from its antecedents, or even because they did not go back far enough in their series of observations

We therefore are bound to study, as profoundly and completely as possible, all the states through which Civilisation has passed, from its origin to the present time We must consider their co-ordination and connection, and how they can be combined under general heads capable of furnishing principles, making manifest the natural laws of the development of Civilisation, and exhibiting the philosophic picture of the social Future as deduced from the Past, in other words, determining the general Plan of Reorganisation destined for the present epoch Lastly, we need the application of these results to the present state of things, so as to determine the direction which ought to be impressed on political action, with a view to facilitate the definitive transition to the New social state Such are the operations essential for giving to Political Theory a positive basis adequate to the most urgent needs of Society.

The above constitutes the First Series of theoretical problems, for the solution of which I venture to invoke the combined forces of the scientific thinkers of Europe

Comparison of Scientific with Theological and Metaphysical Politics

The considerations set forth above having sufficiently indicated the spirit of Positive Politics, its comparison with Theological and Metaphysical Politics may be rendered more precise

Comparing them, in the first place, from the most important point of view, in reference to the actual wants of society, the superiority of Positive Politics is easily explained. Its superiority consists in the fact that the positive system *discovers*, whereas other systems *invent*. Theological and Metaphysical Politics devise plans for regulating the present state of Civilisation which accord with the Absolute conditions assumed to be the highest good Positive Politics proposes measures based on Observation, as being simply those which the course of Civilisation tends to produce This difference in method renders it equally impossible for the politics of Imagination to discover, or for the politics of Observation to miss, the true Social Reorganisation The one makes the greatest efforts to invent a remedy without considering the malady The other, persuaded that the principal source of recovery is the vital force of the patient, confines itself to ascertaining, from Observation, the natural issue of the crisis, in order to facilitate it by eliminating the obstacles that spring from empiricism

In the second place, a Scientific Politics can alone furnish men with a theory about which it is possible to agree, and this is a matter of the first importance

Theological and Metaphysical Politics, aiming at the best possible Government, lead to interminable discussions, since such a problem cannot be reduced to certainty The political system should be, and of necessity is, in harmony with

the state of Civilisation. The best for each epoch is that which suits it best. Therefore there is not, and cannot be, any political system absolutely preferable to all others, there are merely some states of Civilisation more perfect than others Institutions good at one period may be, and most frequently are, bad at another, and vice versa Thus, for example, Slavery, which is now a monstrosity, was certainly at its origin an admirable institution, designed to prevent the strong from destroying the weak, constituting an unavoidable transition in the general development of Civilisation In like manner, conversely, Liberty which, to a reasonable extent, becomes so useful to individuals and nations that have reached a certain state of knowledge and contracted some habits of foresight, by permitting the development of their faculties, is very mischievous to those who have not yet fulfilled these two conditions, and who require for the sake of themselves, as well as of others, to be kept in tutelage It is, therefore, evident that there can be no common agreement as to what forms the absolutely best possible Government To re-establish harmony, no other expedient would be admissible but that of entirely proscribing any discussion of the plan laid down. This is the course which Theological Politics adopted, more consistent in this respect than Metaphysical Politics, since its actual persistence proved that it fulfilled the conditions of existence We know that Metaphysics, by giving unrestrained scope to the Imagination, has induced a doubt and even a formal denial of the utility of the social state for the happiness of man, a conclusion which strikingly illustrates the impossibility of agreement upon such questions

The practical aim of Scientific Politics being,

on the contrary, to ascertain the system which the march of Civilisation, as indicated by the Past, now tends to bring about, the problem is altogether positive and can be decided by Observation The freest investigation can and should be accorded, without any fear of its leading to disorder. After the lapse of a certain time, competent minds, and, finally, all men, must agree as to the natural laws which govern the progress of Civilisation, and as to the resultant system, whatever may originally have been their speculative opinions; just as men have ended in a common understanding about the laws of the solar system, those of the human organisation, etc

Finally, Positive Politics furnishes the only road by which the human race can find an issue from arbitrary courses, under the dominion of which it must remain so long as the Theological and Metaphysical Politics predominate.

The Absolute in Theory necessarily leads to the Arbitrary in Practice So long as the human race is considered to contain no spontaneous principle of movement, but to owe its impulse to the legislator, so long, in spite of the most eloquent declamations, must the arbitrary subsist in the highest degree and affect the most essential aspects of life. The nature of things imposes this necessity The human race being thus abandoned to the discretion of the legislator, who decides on the best possible form of Government, arbitrary power may be limited as to details, but manifestly can never be excluded from the ensemble Whether the supreme legislative office be in the hands of one or of many, whether it be hereditary or elective, makes no difference in this respect Even if the entire body politic became the legislator, supposing this were possible, the result would be the same, with this difference only,

that arbitrary power being then exerted by the whole of society over itself, the inconveniences would become greater than ever

On the contrary, Scientific Politics wholly excludes the Arbitrary, because it banishes those absolute and vague conceptions which gave birth to and maintain it Under such a social system, the human race is regarded as subject to a natural law of development which can be ascertained by Observation, and which prescribes for each epoch, in the most unmistakable manner, the political course it is possible to pursue The Arbitrary of necessity ceases then Government by measures replaces government by men Then arises in Politics a true *Law*, understood in the real and philosophic sense which the illustrious Montesquieu attached to that phrase Whatever may be the form of government as to its details, in substance, at least, the Arbitrary cannot then reappear In Politics all is settled by a truly supreme Law, recognised as superior to all human forces, since it ultimately flows from the nature of our organisation, over which no influence can be exerted In a word, this Law excludes with equal efficacy, the Arbitrary of Theology or the Divine Right of Kings, and the Arbitrary of Metaphysics or the Sovereignty of the People

If some should regard the supreme dominion of such a law as merely another form of the arbitrary, as it now exists, they should in consistency also complain of the inflexible despotism exercised over the whole of Nature by the law of gravitation, as well as of the despotism—no less real, and more analogous as being more susceptible of modification—exercised by the laws of the human organisation, of which the course of Civilisation is merely the result

The preceding remarks naturally lead us to mark

out with precision the respective domains of Observation and Imagination in Politics. This investigation will complete our sketch of the general spirit of the New Politics.

Positive Politics must be based on Observation

In truth, it is necessary to distinguish between two sorts of operations. The first, constituting Political Science proper, aims at forming a system suitable to the present period, the second concerns its propagation

In the first class of operations, it is clear that the Imagination ought only to play a subordinate part, remaining at all times under the guidance of the observing powers, as in the other sciences. In the study of the Past, the Imagination can and should be employed to discover means for provisionally connecting the facts, until their true relations are recognised from the facts themselves, the point always to be kept in view. Even this use of the Imagination should only embrace secondary facts, any other use of it being manifestly erroneous In the second place, the determination of the system according to which Society is, in our day, destined to effect its own Reorganisation should be almost wholly inferred from Observation of the Past Its study will determine not only the ensemble of the system, but its most important portions, with a precision which will probably astonish the scientific men when they commence the work It is, nevertheless, certain, that the degree of precision obtainable by this method cannot reach the point at which the system could be confided to the Leaders of Industry, for actual use by them in practical combinations, as indicated in the preceding General View Accordingly, under this latter aspect also, Imagination should play a minor part in Scientific Politics This will consist in conferring the necessary degree of

precision on the outlines of the New System, the general plan and the characteristic features of which have been determined by Observation

There is, however, another class of operations equally indispensable for the definitive success of the grand enterprise of Social Reorganisation, a class subordinate to the preceding one, but where the Imagination finds full scope for its exercise

In ascertaining what is to be the New System, it is necessary to put aside its advantages or disadvantages The principal, indeed, the only question, should be: what is that Social System indicated by Observation of the Past, which the progress of Civilisation must establish? To occupy our thoughts much about the excellence of that system would be to confuse everything and even to miss our goal We should confine ourselves to the simple conception that, inasmuch as the positive idea of goodness and that of harmony with the state of Civilisation are identical, we are certain to obtain the best system now attainable, if we discover that which is most in harmony with the present state of Civilisation The idea of goodness having, as a positive conception, no separate existence, and becoming positive only when connected with the state of Civilisation, we should apply ourselves to the latter, as constituting the direct object of our researches, and alone capable of rendering Politics positive The demonstration of the advantages of the New System and its superiority over the antecedent states should be regarded as of secondary value, and not allowed to exercise any influence in guiding our labours

It is incontrovertible that by proceeding in this way we shall found a Politics truly scientific and in harmony with the great needs of society The New System should be determined in this way, but it is clear that to ensure its definitive adop-

tion by society, it ought not to be presented under this guise, which is very far from being the fittest for the purpose

To establish a New Social System, sound Theory is not sufficient.

In order to establish a New Social System, just conceptions will not suffice It is necessary that the mass of society should feel attracted by it This condition is not merely indispensable to overcome the obstacles, more or less serious, which this System must encounter among the classes who are losing their ascendancy It is needed, above all, for the satisfaction of the moral need for enthusiasm inherent in man, when he enters upon a new career. Without such enthusiasm, he could neither overcome his natural inertness nor shake off the powerful yoke of ancient habits, which is necessary in order to secure the free and full development of all his faculties in their new occupation Since this necessity always manifests itself even in the least complicated cases, its absence in the most complete and important changes, in those which must most deeply modify human existence, would involve a contradiction. Thus all history testifies in favour of this truth

It is, therefore, clear that the scientific mode of conceiving and presenting the New System is not at all fitted to fulfil this indispensable condition

The mass of mankind will never be inspired with a passion for any system, by proving to them that it is one which the progress of Civilisation has prepared, and now demands for the guidance of society A truth of this nature is accessible to a very limited circle, and even for them demands too long a series of mental operations to allow of its inspiring an attachment It can only produce among men of science that profound and tenacious

conviction, the necessary result of scientific demonstrations, which offers a stronger resistance, but for that very reason is less active, than the lively and captivating persuasion of ideas that excite the passions

The New System must be propagated by the aid of the Imagination

The only way of obtaining this result consists in presenting a vivid picture of the ameliorations which the New System should bring about in the condition of mankind, regarded from all points of view, and apart from its necessity and opportuneness Such a perspective alone can induce men to effect the moral revolution within themselves, essential for establishing the New System This alone can repress that egotism, now rendered predominant by the dissolution of the Old System, which, after our ideas have been enlightened by scientific labours, will remain as the only serious obstacle to the triumph of the New Social Organisation This alone can draw Society from its apathy, and impress on it that active devotedness which is demanded by a social state destined to maintain all the human faculties in constant action

Here, then, we find a sphere of labour in which the Imagination should perform the principal part Its activity can produce no bad effect, since this will be exerted in the direction pointed out by scientific labours, and it will aim, not at inventing a New System, but at spreading one which has been determined by Positive Politics Thus set in motion the Imagination ought to be entirely left to itself The more open and free its attitude, the more complete and salutary will be its indispensable activity

Such is the part specially reserved for the Fine Arts in the general work of Social Reorganisation Thus this vast enterprise will obtain the co-

operation of all the positive forces, that of the Scientific Thinkers to determine the plan of the New System; that of the Artists to cause its universal adoption, and that of the Industrial Chiefs to put it into immediate execution by establishing the needful practical institutions These three great forces will lend each other a mutual support in founding the New System, as they will do to ensure its daily application when established

In determining, then, the social system suitable to the present epoch, Positive Politics invests Observation with the supremacy now accorded to Imagination. At the same time it confides to the Imagination a new and far superior office to that which Theological and Metaphysical Politics assigned to it, for since the human race has advanced near the positive state, the imaginative faculty, though supreme, has revolved in a circle of obsolete ideas and monotonous pictures

Review of the chief efforts to found Positive Politics

Having sketched the general nature of Positive Politics it is useful to cast a rapid glance over the chief attempts made hitherto to raise Politics to the rank of the Sciences of Observation We shall thus gain a twofold advantage; that of showing that the time is ripe for such an undertaking, and of throwing light upon the spirit of the new Politics by exhibiting it under several points of view differing from those already indicated

1. Montesquieu

Montesquieu must have the credit of the earliest direct attempt to treat Politics as a science of facts and not of dogmas Such evidently is the true aim of the *Spirit of Laws*,[1] as all who understand this work will concede The opening chapter where the general idea of *law* is for the first time presented would alone suffice to show this It is clear

[1] [*L'Esprit des Lois*, published 1748]

that Montesquieu mainly aimed at ranging, as far as possible, under a certain number of heads all the political facts known to him, and at exhibiting the laws of their connection

Were it our task to appreciate such a work, its merits should be judged relatively to the period of its execution. We would then perceive that the *Spirit of Laws* decisively establishes the philosophic superiority of Montesquieu over his contemporaries. To have emancipated himself from the negative spirit at the time when it exerted the most despotic power even over the greatest intellects; to have profoundly felt the worthlessness of a Metaphysical and Absolute Politics, to have appreciated the necessity for departing from it at the very time when, in the hands of Rousseau, it was assuming its definitive form, these are decisive proofs of Montesquieu's mental superiority.

Errors of Montesquieu

But in spite of the supreme ability evinced by Montesquieu, which will be more and more acknowledged, his labours are far from having raised Politics to the rank of a positive science They have not in the least satisfied the fundamental and indispensable requisites for attaining this object, as set forth above

Montesquieu did not perceive that great fact which regulates all political phenomena, the natural development of Civilisation Hence it follows that his researches can only be employed as materials, as a collection of observations and hints towards the creation of the Positive system of Politics For the general views which he employed to connect the facts are not positive

Notwithstanding the manifest efforts of Montesquieu to disentangle himself from Metaphysics, he did not succeed in doing so From metaphysical considerations he undoubtedly deduced his prin-

cipal conception This conception has a double fault Instead of being historical it is dogmatic, in other words, it does not sufficiently regard the necessary succession of the different political states In the second place, it attributes an exaggerated importance to a fact which is altogether secondary—the form of government Accordingly, the preponderating influence which Montesquieu has given to this idea is purely imaginary and contradicts the best established facts In a word, the political facts have not been truly *co-ordinated* as they should be in every positive science They have merely been *grouped* under hypothetical ideas, contrary, for the most part, to their true relations

Influence of climate on Social phenomena

The only important portion of the theoretical works of Montesquieu possessing a truly positive character is that which concerns the political influence of physical and local circumstances, acting continuously, designated by the term Climate But it is easy to see that, even in this respect, in consequence of the general error of his method, the ideas put forward by Montesquieu can only be employed after they have been entirely recast

In truth, it is now clearly recognised by all observers that Montesquieu has in several respects greatly exaggerated the influence of Climate. Such exaggeration was unavoidable

No doubt Climate exerts over political phenomena a real action which it is very important to understand But such action is only indirect and secondary It is confined to accelerating or retarding in a certain measure the natural progress of Civilisation, but this cannot in itself be affected by these modifications In truth, this progress is identical in all climates, except as regards its

rapidity, because it springs from more general laws, those of the human organisation, essentially the same for all localities Since, then, the influence of Climate over political phenomena merely modifies the natural course of Civilisation, which maintains its predominance, this influence cannot be studied with advantage and properly estimated until the fundamental law has been ascertained If the indirect and subordinate cause were studied before the direct and principal cause, such a violation of the laws of the human mind would unavoidably give an entirely false idea of the influence of the former, and lead to its being confounded with that of the latter This is what happened in the case of Montesquieu

The foregoing reflections on the influence of Climate obviously apply to all other causes which, without essentially altering the course of Civilisation, can modify its rate of advance This influence can only be determined precisely when the natural laws of Civilisation shall have been established, by first eliminating all such modifications Astronomers in commencing their study of the laws of the planetary movements omitted all consideration of the perturbations After these laws had been discovered, the modifications could be determined and even reduced to the general law which had only been at first established with reference to the principal movement. If the attempt had been made at the beginning to account for the irregularities, it is plain that no precise theory could ever have been constructed. The case is exactly the same as regards the present subject.

Inadequacy of Montesquieu's system

The inadequacy of the political system of Montesquieu can be clearly verified in its applications to the needs of society

The necessity for a Social Reorganisation in the most advanced countries existed as truly in the time of Montesquieu as it does now For the bases of the Catholic-Feudal System had already been destroyed. Subsequent events, by completing the destruction of the Old System, have only rendered this necessity more evident and more urgent Montesquieu, however, did not propose the creation of a New Social System as the practical aim of his labours Since he had not co-ordinated the political facts by a theory fitted to render evident the necessity for a revolution at the stage which society had then reached, and at the same time to exhibit the general character of the New System, he could, as in fact he did, only confine himself to indicating improvements in detail suggested by experience, which simply constituted modifications, more or less important, of the Catholic-Feudal System

Montesquieu no doubt showed a wise moderation, in confining his practical suggestions within the limits which the facts as imperfectly studied by him imposed, when, on the other hand, he could so easily have invented utopias At the same time, he clearly evinced the inadequacy of a theory which was unfitted to meet the most essential demands of practical life

To conclude, then, Montesquieu felt the necessity of treating Politics by the same method as the Sciences of Observation, but he did not form any conception of the general operation needed to effect this purpose His researches, nevertheless, were of the utmost importance They facilitated the intellectual combination of political ideas, since they presented a mass of facts co-ordinated by a theory which, though far removed from the positive state, approached it much more nearly than all anterior efforts.

2 Condorcet

It was Condorcet who grasped the general conception of the operations fitted to raise Politics to the rank of the Sciences of Observation He first saw clearly that Civilisation is subject to a progressive course, every step of which is strictly connected with the rest by virtue of natural laws, discoverable through philosophic observation of the Past, which determine, in a positive manner for each epoch, the improvements adapted to the social state as a whole, and to each portion of it Not only did Condorcet thus conceive the method of impressing on Politics a truly positive character, but he endeavoured to demonstrate the theory in the work entitled "Sketch of an historical view of the progress of the human mind", [1] of which the title and introduction alone should suffice to secure for its author the eternal honour of having created this great philosophic conception

If this capital discovery has hitherto remained wholly barren, and has, as yet, made hardly any sensation, if no one has pursued the track pointed out by Condorcet, if, in a word, Politics have not become Positive, we must attribute this, in great part, to the fact that the sketch which Condorcet traced was executed in a way quite at variance with the object of his undertaking He completely misconceived its most essential conditions, so much so that the work needs to be entirely recast It is necessary to prove this

Condorcet's Classification of Historical Epochs erroneous

In the first place, the Classification of Epochs constitutes the most important portion of the plan in a work of this nature, or, to speak more correctly, it constitutes the plan

[1] [*Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain*, published posthumously in 1795.]

itself, considered in its greatest generality, since it determines the principal mode of co-ordinating the facts observed Now, the method of classifying the facts which Condorcet adopted is absolutely erroneous, since it does not fulfil even the most obvious condition, that of presenting a homogeneous series, We see that Condorcet by no means felt the importance of a philosophic classification of the Epochs of Civilisation. He did not perceive that this classification should itself be the object of a preliminary operation, the most difficult of those which the formation of Positive Politics demands He imagined that he could adequately co-ordinate facts by assuming, almost arbitrarily, some remarkable event for the commencement of each Epoch, now industrial, then scientific, or political By adopting this plan, he remained within the circle of literary historians It was impossible for him to form a true theory, that is to say, to establish a real connection between the facts, since those intended to connect all the rest were disconnected from each other.

True principle of Classification

To the Naturalists, as being of all men of science those who are obliged to form the most extended and difficult classifications, are due the chief advances in the general method of classifying. The fundamental principle of this method has been established from the time that Botany and Zoology produced philosophical classifications that is to say, classifications, based on real relations and not on fictitious groupings The true Principle consists in making the order of generality *of the different degrees of division* conform, as far as possible, to that of the relations observed between the phenomena to be classed In this view the hierarchy of families, of genera, etc, is nothing but the statement of a co-ordinated series of general facts, divided into different ranks,

more and more specialised In a word the classification then becomes merely a philosophic expression of the science, the progress of which it follows To know the Classification is to know the Science, at least in its more important portions.

This principle is applicable to every science. Accordingly, Political Science, seeking to attain a solid basis, should profit by this philosophical conception as disclosed, employed, and verified by the other sciences, and take it as a guide in *classifying the different Ages of Civilisation* The grounds for arranging the various Epochs of Civilisation, in reference to the general history of the human race, according to their natural relations, exactly resemble those which naturalists employ in classifying the animal and vegetable kingdoms In Political Science, however, they are still more urgent

For, if an appropriate co-ordination of facts is of the first importance in every science, it is all in all for Political Science, which if this condition were unfulfilled would entirely fail in its practical aim This aim is, as we know, that of determining by the Observation of the past the Social System which the progress of Civilisation tends to realise in our day Now this determination can only result from a [illegible] co-ordination of the anterior states, which would disclose the law of this progress It is clear from this that political facts, however important they be, possess no practical value unless co-ordinated, while in the other sciences the knowledge of facts independently of their mutual relations has, for the most part, a certain utility

The different epochs of Civilisation, then, in place of being distributed, as Condorcet did, without regard to their natural order, and merely in reference to events of greater or less importance,

ought to be disposed in accordance with the philosophic principle already recognised by men of science as that which should govern all Classifications The principal Division of Epochs should offer the most general view of the History of Civilisation The secondary divisions, to whatever degree it may be deemed advisable to carry them, should offer in succession more and more detailed views of this same history In a word, the tabular Arrangement of Epochs should be of such a nature as to present, in itself, an abridged expression of the ensemble of the work The work, if it fell short of this, would only be provisional, and however well executed would have no value except as a collection of materials

It is evident that such a division of epochs cannot be invented, and that, even in its most general aspect, it can only spring from a first sketch of the synoptic view, a first glance over the general History of Civilisation Doubtless, however important, and even indispensable, this method may be, in the formation of Positive Politics, its application would be impracticable and a provisional work only could be accomplished, if this latter were not already sufficiently prepared. But the histories hitherto written, and particularly those produced within the last half century, although very far from having been conceived in a right spirit, furnish a tolerable equivalent for this preliminary collection of materials We can therefore immediately undertake the task of a definitive co-ordination

I have already submitted, though under the spiritual aspect only, a general view which, as it seems to me, fulfils the conditions stated above for effecting the primary co-ordination of the Past.

It constitutes the first result of a philosophic study of the ensemble of the History of Civilisation.

I believe that this History may be divided into Three great Epochs, or states of Civilisation, each possessing a distinct character, Spiritual and Temporal. They embrace Civilisation at once in its elements and its ensemble, which, as pointed out above, evidently constitutes an indispensable condition of success.

Of these the First is the Theological and Military Epoch.

In this state of society, all theoretical conceptions, whether general or special, are of a purely supernatural order The Imagination completely predominates over the Observing faculty, to which all right of inquiry is denied.

In like manner, all the social relations, whether special or general, are avowedly and exclusively Military. Society makes conquest its one permanent aim Industrial pursuits are carried on only so far as is necessary for the support of the human race Slavery, pure and simple, of the producers is the principal institution.

Such is the first great social system produced by the natural march of Civilisation It existed in an elementary shape from the very commencement of regular and permanent societies In its entirety, it became completely established only after a long series of generations.

The Second Epoch is Metaphysical and Juridical Its general character is that of possessing no well-defined characteristics It forms a transitional link between the other two epochs, of mongrel nature

Under Spiritual aspects it has been already characterised in the preceding General View. Observation is still kept subordinate to Imagination, but the former is, within certain limits, allowed to modify the latter These limits are gradually

enlarged until, in the end, Observation conquers the right of examining in every direction. At first it obtains this right in reference to all special theoretical conceptions, and gradually, by force of exercise, as to general theoretic ideas, which constitutes the natural termination of this transition. This period is one of criticism and argument

Under Temporal aspects, Industry in this Second Epoch becomes more extended, without as yet acquiring the upper hand Consequently, society is no longer frankly military and yet has not become frankly industrial, either in its elements or in its ensemble The special social relations are modified Individual slavery is no longer direct, the producer, though not free, begins to obtain some rights in his relations with the military Industry makes fresh advances which finally issue in the total abolition of private slavery. After this enfranchisement, the producers still remain subject to a collective arbitrary authority Nevertheless, the general social relations also soon undergo a modification The two aims of activity, conquest and production, advance *pari passu* Industry is at first favoured and protected as a military resource Later, its importance augments, and finally, War is regarded and systematically pursued as a means of favouring Industry, this is the last phase of the intermediate social system.

Lastly, the Third Epoch is that of Science and Industry All special theoretic conceptions have become positive and the general conceptions tend to become so As regards the former, Observation predominates over Imagination, while in reference to the latter, Observation has dethroned the Imagination, without having as yet taken its place

Under Temporal aspects Industry has become predominant. All the special relations have

gradually established themselves upon industrial bases. Society, taken collectively, tends to organise itself in the same manner, by making production its only and constant aim

In fact, the last epoch has already ended as regards its elements and is commencing as regards its ensemble Its direct point of departure dates from the introduction of the Positive Sciences into Europe by the Arabs, and the Enfranchisement of the Commons, that is to say, from about the eleventh century

In order to prevent all confusion in applying this general view, we should never lose sight of the fact that Civilisation necessarily progressed in reference to the Spiritual and Temporal *elements* of the social state, before advancing in regard to their *ensemble.* Consequently, the three great and successive phases were inevitably inaugurated as to their elements before they commenced as to the ensemble, a circumstance which might occasion some confusion if we did not make a large allowance for this unavoidable difference

Such, then, are the principal characteristics of the Three Epochs into which we can divide the entire History of Civilisation, from the period when the social state began to acquire real solidity until the present time I venture to submit to scientific thinkers this primary division of the Past, which appears to me to fulfil the essential conditions of a good classification of the ensemble of political facts

If this be adopted we must find at least one subdivision, in order to execute suitably a first sketch of this great historic series The principal division will facilitate the discovery of those which should succeed it, by supplying the means of considering the phenomena from a point of view at once general and positive It is clear also that, in con-

formity with our fundamental Principle of Classification, these different subdivisions should be conceived in the same spirit as the principal division, and constitute simply a development of it

Having thus examined the work of Condorcet as regards the Classification of Epochs, we must consider the spirit which presided over its execution

Condorcet's historical prejudices

Condorcet did not perceive that the first direct result of a work which aimed at the formation of a Positive Politics would be the disappearance for ever of the Critical Philosophy of the eighteenth century, by turning the efforts of thinkers towards the Reorganisation of Society, as the practical aim of their labours Consequently, he did not feel that the preliminary condition, the fulfilment of which was indispensable for executing the important enterprise, consisted in divesting himself, as much as possible, of the prejudices introduced into all minds by this Negative Philosophy Far from doing so, he allowed himself to be blindly governed by these prejudices In place of observing, he condemned the Past Hence his work simply became a long fatiguing declamation, from which no really positive instruction can be derived

Admiration and reprobation of phenomena ought to be banished with equal severity from every positive science, because all preoccupations of this sort directly and unavoidably tend to hinder or mislead examination Astronomers, physicists, chemists, and physiologists neither admire nor blame their respective phenomena. They observe them, although these phenomena may afford ample subject for reflections of each sort, of which numerous examples may be cited. Men of Science, with reason, leave such considerations to Artists, within whose sphere they really fall.

It should be the same in this respect in Political Science as in the other sciences. Such exclusion of admiration or reprobation is, however, much more needed for the former, because there it becomes more difficult and affects the investigation more deeply, inasmuch as, in this science, the phenomena are much more closely connected with the passions than in any other. Thus the Critical Spirit to which Condorcet yielded is directly contrary to that which ought to reign in Scientific Politics, even though all the criticisms it makes on the Past were well founded But the mischief does not stop here

No doubt, as has been already remarked in this First Series, the practical combinations of statesmen have not always been conceived in a suitable way, and frequently they have even been directed in a sense adverse to Civilisation This observation, however, merely amounts to this, that statesmen have endeavoured to continue, beyond their natural existence, doctrines and institutions no longer in harmony with the state of Civilisation Assuredly such a mistake will appear very excusable, if we consider that hitherto no positive mode has existed of discovering that it was an error. But to apply to entire systems of ideas and institutions a view applicable only to facts of secondary importance ; to represent, for example, as simply an obstacle to Civilisation, that Catholic-Feudal System which constituted, on the contrary, the most marked provisional progress of society and enabled it to effect so many definitive conquests , to represent the classes who, during a long succession of ages, led the general movement of society as engaged in a permanent conspiracy against mankind , such a spirit, equally absurd in its principles and revolting in its consequences, is, I say, the irrational result of

the philosophy of the last century, and it is deplorable that a man like Condorcet should have been unable to withdraw himself from its influence.

This absurdity, springing from the inability to comprehend the natural connection between the advancing steps of Civilisation, manifestly makes it impossible to explain them. Accordingly, the work of Condorcet, generally speaking, is in constant contradiction with itself

On the one hand, it proclaims the state of Civilisation reached in the Eighteenth Century as being in very many respects far superior to its original condition But the total progress could only be the sum of the partial advances effected by Civilisation during all the preceding states Condorcet, on the other hand, almost invariably represents these as having been, from the most essential points of view, periods of retrogradation We are thus landed in a perpetual miracle, and the progressive march of Civilisation becomes an effect without a cause.

Characteristics of the true Historical Spirit

In a truly Positive Politics an entirely opposite spirit should prevail We should regard institutions and doctrines as having reached, at every period, the greatest perfection compatible with the corresponding Civilisation, and this must have been the case, at least after a certain time, since they were necessarily determined by it Moreover, during their greatest vigour, they always manifested a progressive and never a retrograde character Otherwise they never could have held their ground against the march of Civilisation whence their power was derived In the period of their decline they usually exhibited a stationary character, a fact easily explicable, partly by the repugnance to extinction, as natural to political systems as it is to individuals, partly by

the state of infancy in which Politics have hitherto continued

We must consider in the same spirit the passions developed at the various epochs by the governing classes During their greatest vigour such social forces are necessarily generous, for they have nothing more to gain and they have not yet learnt to fear It is only when their decline commences that they become egotistic, because all their efforts are then directed to preserving a power whose foundation is sapped.

These views are in evident conformity with the laws of human nature, and alone furnish a satisfactory explanation of political phenomena In a final analysis, then, instead of regarding the Past as a tissue of monstrosities, we should, generally speaking, consider Society as having been on the whole guided in all respects with as much wisdom as the situation allowed

If, at first sight, some special facts appear to contradict this general fact, it is always more philosophical to endeavour to discover the cause of the seeming deviation than at once to allege the existence of a contradiction For it would be a departure from established scientific method to subordinate the most important and best established fact to one of secondary nature and less frequent occurrence

It is, nevertheless, evident that this idea, like every other general one, should not be used without proper limitations, so as to avoid all exaggeration

This Spirit is that of Meliorism, not Optimism

No doubt some resemblance is discoverable between the spirit of Positive Politics thus regarded, and the famous theological and metaphysical dogma of Optimism The analogy is, in truth, real But there exists an immeasurable difference between a general observed fact and an hypotheti-

cal creation of the Imagination. The difference becomes still greater when we take the consequences into account

The theological and metaphysical dogma, by proclaiming as an absolute truth that everything is as well ordered as possible, tends to make the human race stationary, since it takes away all prospect of real improvement The Positive conception that the Social Organisation for a certain period during each epoch is as perfect as the state of Civilisation permits, by no means checks the spirit of improvement On the contrary, this view imparts in practice a more efficacious impulse, since it directs to their true end,—the improvement of Civilisation,—efforts which would have remained abortive had they been directly applied to Social Organisation Besides, such a conception, being neither absolute nor mystical, incites man to re-establish harmony between the political system and the state of Civilisation, in cases where that relation has been temporarily deranged But it throws light on the operation, by warning us in such a case not to mistake the effect for the cause

Positive Philosophy transforms the general ideas of Theology and Metaphysics into Scientific conceptions

In reference to this analogy it is useful to observe that, in other matters also, the Positive Philosophy can, by a suitable transformation, appropriate a general idea originated by the Theological and Metaphysical Philosophy True general ideas, however erroneous may be the form they assume, never lose their value as methods of reasoning The ordinary progress of the human mind consists in adapting them to its different states by transforming their character We can verify this in all the revolutions through which the different branches of knowledge have passed to the positive state

Thus, for example, the mystic doctrine of the Influence of Numbers, originated by the School of Pythagoras, has been reduced by geometers to this simple and positive idea: phenomena which do not offer much complication can be reduced to mathematical laws In like manner the doctrine of Final Causes has been transformed by physiologists into the principle of Conditions of Existence The two positive ideas, doubtless, differ widely from the two theological and metaphysical ideas. But the latter, no less manifestly, contain the germ of the former A well-conceived philosophical operation sufficed to impart a positive character to these two hypotheses, the products of genius in the infancy of the human race Moreover this transformation, far from impairing, has actually augmented their value as means of reasoning

The same reflections are exactly applicable to the two general political ideas, one positive, the other fictitious, compared above

Scientific prediction of the Future

Before terminating our examination of the work of Condorcet, it is well to deduce from it a third point of view from which we may consider the spirit of Positive Politics

Condorcet has frequently been reproached with having ventured to terminate his work with a picture of the Future This bold conception is, on the contrary, the only philosophical view of great importance introduced by Condorcet into his work, and one that ought to be carefully preserved in the new History of Civilisation, of which such a picture evidently constitutes the natural conclusion

The reproach which may with reason be addressed to Condorcet is not that of having endeavoured to determine the Future, but of having determined it erroneously This arose from his

mode of conceiving the Past, which, for the reasons already stated, was completely erroneous Condorcet having co-ordinated the Past in a mistaken way, the Future could not be deduced from it This inadequacy of observation obliged him to frame the Future in accordance with his imagination, and, as a necessary consequence of this, he conceived it wrongly But this want of success, the cause of which is obvious, does not prove that, supposing the Past to be rightly co-ordinated, we cannot determine with certainty the general characteristics of the Social Future

Such an idea only seems strange because we are not yet accustomed to regard Politics as a true science For, thus regarded, the determination of the Future through the philosophic observation of the Past would, on the contrary, strike us as perfectly natural, being familiarised to us by other kinds of phenomena

All sciences aim at prevision For the laws established by the observation of phenomena are generally employed to foretell their succession In truth, all men, however little advanced, make predictions, based on the same principle, the forecast of the Future from the Past. All men, for example, predict the general effects of terrestrial gravity and a multitude of other phenomena, sufficiently simple and usual to reveal their order of succession to the least capable and attentive spectator The power of prevision is measured in each person by the extent of his knowledge. The prevision of the astronomer who predicts, with complete accuracy, the condition of the solar system many years in advance, is absolutely the same in kind as that of the savage who predicts the next sunrise The only difference lies in the extent of their knowledge

Manifestly, then, it is quite in accordance with

ne nature of the human mind that observation f the Past should reveal the Future in Politics as it as done in Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, and hysiology.

Such a determination of the Future should even e regarded as the direct object of Political cience, as of the other positive sciences It is lear, in truth, that the ascertainment of the ocial System, in which the élite of the human ace are in our day called on to take part, contitutes the true practical object of Positive 'olitics, and is nothing but a general determination of the Future of society regarded as the result f the Past

To sum up, Condorcet was the first to conceive ne true nature of the general operations required or raising Politics to the rank of the Sciences of Observation, but his execution of this conception as, under the most essential aspects, completely rroneous The end was entirely missed, first n theory and, consequently, in practice Thus this peration must be once more undertaken as a hole, in accordance with a truly philosophical method, Condorcet's attempt being considered merely as an indication of the real end of Scientific 'olitics

wo other ttempts to ound Scientific Politics

In order to complete this brief examination of the efforts hitherto made to raise Politics to the rank of the positive sciences, it remains for us to onsider two other attempts These, unlike the wo former, do not fall within the true course of ntellectual progress in political science, nevertheless, it is useful to mention them

The necessity for rendering Social Science ositive is so evident in our day, this great enterprise has so completely arrived at maturity, that everal superior minds have endeavoured to

achieve it by treating Politics as an application of other sciences, already rendered positive, by bringing it within their sphere As these attempts, from their nature, could not be realised, they were much oftener projected than followed out. It will, therefore, be sufficient to consider them from the most general point of view.

1. Mathematical attempt—Condorcet.

The first consisted in the attempt to treat Social Science by Mathematical Analysis, and in particular by the Calculus of Probabilities This road was opened by Condorcet,[1] who was the chief exponent of this method. Other geometers pursued his path and shared his hopes, but added nothing essential to his labours, at least, under the philosophical aspect. All agreed in regarding this method as the only one adapted to impress a positive character on Politics.

The considerations developed in this First Series seem to me to establish sufficiently that the application of Mathematical Analysis is in no degree necessary to render Politics a positive science. We cannot, however, stop there, for it is easy to see that such a mode of regarding Social Science is purely chimerical and, consequently, altogether erroneous

Were it our business to examine here in detail the works of this sort hitherto executed, we could easily prove that they have added no idea of any value to the mass of acquired knowledge For example, we should find that the efforts of

1 Such a project on the part of Condorcet proves, as we have seen in our previous inquiry, that he was far from having clearly conceived the fundamental importance of the History of Civilisation. For had he discerned in the philosophic observation of the Past the method of rendering social science positive, he would not have sought this elsewhere.

geometers to press the Calculus of Probabilities beyond its legitimate scope have only resulted in offering, after long and troublesome calculations, some almost trivial propositions as to the theory of certainty, the truth of which is perceived at once by every man of good sense But we must confine our examination to the enterprise itself, regarded in its greatest generality

Social phenomena are too variable to admit of an extensive application of Mathematics

In the first place, the considerations by which several physiologists, especially Bichat, have shown the entire impossibility, generally speaking, of any real and important application of Mathematical Analysis to the phenomena of organised bodies, are, in a direct and special manner, applicable to moral and political phenomena, which are only a particular development of the former

These considerations are based on the fact that the most indispensable preliminary condition of bringing phenomena within mathematical laws is that their degrees of quantity be fixed Now, in all physiological phenomena every effect, whether partial or total, is subject to vast changes of quantity, which succeed each other with the greatest rapidity and in the most irregular manner, under the influence of a multitude of different causes not susceptible of any precise estimate This extreme variability is one of the leading characteristics of the phenomena peculiar to Organised bodies, and constitutes one of the broadest differences between them and Inorganic phenomena It manifestly excludes all hope of ever submitting them to real calculations, such, for example, as those relating to astronomical phenomena, the best fitted to serve as a type in comparisons of this sort

Having laid down this proposition, one can

easily understand that this perpetual variation of effects—resulting from the extreme complication of the causes that concur in producing them—should reach its maximum in reference to the moral and political phenomena of the human race, since these are of all physiological phenomena the most complicated They are, in truth, the phenomena of *which the quantitative variations* are the *greatest*, the most frequent, and the most irregular

Weighing these considerations with due care we may, without forming too low an opinion of human capacity, unhesitatingly affirm that not merely in the present state of our knowledge, but when this has reached its highest conceivable range, all extensive application of the Calculus to Social Science is, and will remain, necessarily impracticable

Social phenomena must be studied directly

In the second place, even supposing such a hope could be realised, it is incontestably true that, in order to realise it, Political Science must first be studied directly, that is to say, by endeavouring simply to co-ordinate the series of political phenomena.

In truth, admitting the high importance of Mathematical Analysis when rightly employed, we must not lose sight of the fact that it is nothing but a means to an end, it is a Science of Method. In itself it teaches nothing real, and only becomes a fruitful source of positive discovery when applied to observed phenomena

Within the sphere of those phenomena which admit of its being applied, the application can never take place immediately It always assumes, in the corresponding science, a preliminary degree of cultivation and improvement, consisting in the knowledge of [illegible]s discovered by observation, relating [illegible]ty of the phenomena So soon as [illegible]een discovered, however

imperfect they may be, Mathematical Analysis becomes applicable From that time Analysis, affording a powerful instrument of deduction, facilitates the reduction of the phenomena to a small number of laws, often to a single law, and enables us to bring within its range, with the utmost precision, a multitude of phenomena which at first sight do not seem to fall under it In a word, it establishes in the science a complete co-ordination, unattainable to the same extent by any other means But it is manifest that any application of Mathematical Analysis, if attempted before this preliminary condition of the discovery of certain laws of quantity has been fulfilled, would be entirely illusory. Far from rendering any branch of knowledge positive, such a proceeding would only replace the study of Nature in the metaphysical domain, by transferring to abstractions what exclusively belongs to observation

Thus, for example, we can understand why Mathematical Analysis has been applied with great success to Astronomy, geometrical and mechanical, to Optics, to Acoustics, and, quite recently, to the Theory of Heat, as soon as the progress of observation within these various branches of Physics established exact and quantitative laws between their phenomena, though, before these discoveries, such applications could have had no real basis In like manner, again, even those chemists who are most deeply convinced of the possibility of one day applying Mathematical Analysis to chemical phenomena on an extensive scale do not on that account abstain from a direct study of the latter For they are well convinced that a long series of investigations, based on observation and experiment, are essential for arriving at those numerical

laws without which such an application of analysis would want a real foundation

The indispensable condition just indicated is the more difficult of fulfilment, and demands in each science a degree of cultivation and improvement all the greater, in proportion as the phenomena are more complicated In this way, Astronomy became, at least in its geometrical portion, a branch of Applied Mathematics before Optics, Optics before Acoustics, and, last of all, the Theory of Heat But Chemistry in our day is very far from this state, if, indeed, it should ever reach it

In estimating, therefore, by these indisputable principles, the application of the Calculus to physiological phenomena in general, and particularly to the Social phenomena of the human race, we see that, even admitting such an application to be possible, it could in no way dispense with a direct study of these phenomena, which, on the contrary, it prescribes as a condition precedent to any mathematical analysis Moreover, considering with attention the nature of this condition, we shall see it presupposes, as regards the physics of organised bodies in general and Social Physics in particular, a degree of perfection which, even if attainable, could manifestly only be attained after ages of cultivation. The discovery of precise and calculable laws in Physiology would indicate a degree of progress far beyond what is anticipated even by those physiologists who entertain the highest hopes of the future destiny of this science In truth, for the reasons above pointed out, such a state of perfection should be regarded as being entirely chimerical, incompatible with the nature of the phenomena, and quite disproportioned to the real grasp of the human intellect

The same reasons evidently apply, with still

greater force, to Social Science, having regard to the greater complication of its phenomena To imagine the possibility of one day discovering quantitative relations between the phenomena of this science assumes that it can be perfected to such a degree that, even before it had reached that point of perfection, everything really interesting would have been discovered to an extent far exceeding all reasonable expectations Thus Mathematical Analysis would only become applicable at a time when its application could no longer have any real importance

It results from the preceding remarks that, on one hand, the nature of social phenomena absolutely forbids all hope of applying to them Mathematical Analysis, on the other, that its application, assuming it to be possible, could not raise Politics to the rank of a positive science, since this presupposes the existence of political science

Inorganic Science is the proper sphere of Mathematical Analysis

Up to the present time, mathematicians have not sufficiently attended to the great and fundamental division of our positive investigations into the study of Inorganic and of Organised bodies This division, which we owe to physiologists, is now settled on a basis that cannot be shaken, and is established more and more firmly in proportion as it is carefully examined It limits, in a precise and unalterable way, the true applications of Mathematics, even when extended as far as possible We can establish as a principle the impossibility of extending Mathematical Analysis beyond the Physics of Inorganic bodies, the phenomena of which are the only ones which offer the degree of simplicity and, consequently, of fixity, requisite for their reduction to numerical laws

If we take into account how, even in the simplest applications of Mathematical Analysis, its course

is obstructed when we endeavour to bring its abstract results sufficiently into harmony with concrete facts, it will be seen that its real sphere is rather exaggerated than underestimated by the principle above stated

Certainty attainable without the aid of Mathematics

The idea of treating Social Science as an application of Mathematics, in order to give it a positive character, had its source in the metaphysical prejudice that outside of Mathematics there can be no real certainty This prejudice was natural at the period when all positive knowledge lay within the sphere of Applied Mathematics, and when in consequence everything not embraced by them was vague and conjectural But since the rise of two great positive sciences, Chemistry and, still more, Physiology, where Mathematical Analysis plays no part, but which are not the less felt to be as certain as the rest, such a prejudice is entirely inexcusable

Astronomy, Optics, etc, are not positive and certain sciences because they are applications of Mathematical Analysis This character belongs to them in their own nature It results from their being founded on observed facts and can only result from that, for Mathematical Analysis, when isolated from the observation of Nature, has merely a metaphysical character. Undoubtedly, in the sciences to which Mathematics are inapplicable, we should keep much closer to the line of simple and direct observation Deductions cannot be prolonged so far with safety, because the means of reasoning are much less perfect With this single difference and within proper limits, their certainty is as great We obtain, no doubt, a less complete co-ordination, but one sufficient for the real wants of scientific application

The chimerical search after an unattainable

perfection could have no other result but the unavoidable retardation of the progress of the human mind, wasting great intellectual forces and turning the efforts of scientific men from their true direction Such is the definitive judgment which, I believe, should be passed on attempts, past or future, to apply Mathematical Analysis to Social Physics

2 Physiological attempt —Cabanis

A second attempt, and one in its nature infinitely less misleading than the preceding, but equally unattainable, is that which seeks to give a positive character to Social Science by treating it simply as a direct consequence of Physiology Cabanis was the author of this conception, and by him chiefly it was elaborated It forms the true philosophic aim of his celebrated work entitled, *Relations between the Physical and the Moral in Man,* and will be so regarded by every person who looks upon the general doctrine expounded in this work as organic and not purely critical

The considerations submitted in this First Series on the spirit of Positive Politics prove that this attempt, like the one last noticed, was necessarily misconceived But we must point out its precise error

This consists in a disregard of that direct observation of the social past which should supply the fundamental basis of Positive Politics

The superiority of man as compared with the other animals has, and in truth can have, no other cause than the relative perfection of his organisation Therefore everything that the human race has effected, and can effect, must manifestly be regarded as being ultimately a necessary consequence of its organisation, modified in its results by external circumstances In one sense, Social Physics, that is to say, the study of the Collective

Development of the human race, is really a branch of Physiology, or the study of man conceived in its entire extension In other words, the History of Civilisation is nothing but the indispensable result and complement of the Natural History of Man

But if it be important to understand thoroughly, and never to lose sight of, this incontestable filiation, on the other hand, it is a complete mistake to draw the conclusion that it is unnecessary to institute any clear demarcation between Social Physics and Physiology proper

When physiologists study the natural history of an animal species endowed with sociability,—that of the beavers, for example,—they rightly include the history of the collective action exerted by the community They do not consider it necessary to establish a line of demarcation between the study of the social phenomena affecting the race and that of the phenomena which concern the individual Such a want of precision does no real harm in this case, although the two orders of phenomena are distinct. For, inasmuch as the civilisation even of the most intelligent among the sociable races is arrested almost at its commencement, mainly by the imperfections of their organisation, and secondarily by the preponderance of the human race, so short a series of connected facts offers no difficulty to the coordination of the collective phenomena with the individual phenomena Thus the general ground for creating divisions calculated to facilitate study—namely, our intellectual inability to follow too long a chain of deductions—does not exist here

Social filiation of successive generations

On the other hand, let us suppose the species of beavers to have become more intelligent, its civilisation developing itself freely, so that a con-

tinual chain of progress from one generation to another existed, we shall at once feel the necessity for a separate treatment of the history of the social phenomena of the species. As to the earliest generations, this study might still be connected with that of the individual phenomena But in proportion as we receded from the origin, the deduction would become more difficult of verification and at last impracticable This is exactly what takes place in the highest degree with reference to Man

No doubt the Collective phenomena of the human race, as well as its Individual phenomena, must, ultimately, be traced to the special nature of its organisation But the condition of Human Civilisation in each generation directly depends only on that of the preceding, and directly produces only that of the following, generation It is possible to follow this connection, as precisely as is requisite, from the beginning, if we only attempt to establish the immediate relations of the succeeding terms of the series On the contrary, it would entirely exceed our mental force to connect the later with the earliest steps of progress if we suppressed all intermediate links

The rashness of such an enterprise in the study of the Race may be illustrated by a reference to individual phenomena Assume the case of a physiologist who, convinced that the different phenomena of the successive periods of life are simply the consequence and necessary development of the primitive organisation, should attempt to deduce with precision the history of any given vital epoch from the condition of the individual at his birth, and discard all direct examination of the different periods as not required for the comprehension of the developed state The error is even more serious as regards the Race than it

would be in reference to the Individual, seeing that the successive terms of the series are both much more complicated and much more numerous in the first than in the second case

An obstinate perseverance in this impracticable course would not only render it impossible to study the History of Civilisation in a satisfactory manner, but unavoidably lead us into fundamental errors For, owing to the total impossibility of directly connecting the different states of Civilisation with the original and general starting-point as determined by the special nature of man, we should soon be led to attribute to the immediate action of secondary organic circumstances, facts that really are remote consequences of the fundamental laws of our organisation.

Thus, for example, several distinguished physiologists have given an exaggerated importance to social characteristics, as explaining political phenomena They have attributed to them national differences, almost invariably due to the inequality of advance in Civilisation Hence the unfortunate error of treating what in truth is but momentary, as if it were unalterable Such aberrations, of which it would be easy to multiply examples, and which are all derived from the same primitive error in the mode of proceeding, clearly confirm the necessity for separating the study of social from that of ordinary physiological phenomena

Social phenomena are not deducible from physiological data

Mathematicians who have attained to philosophical conceptions look upon the phenomena of the Universe, both Organic and Inorganic, as embraced by a small number of immutable laws, common to them all On this physiologists with reason observe that, even supposing all these were one day perfectly known, the impossibility

of making an uninterrupted series of deductions would necessitate the maintenance of the division between the study of living and that of inert bodies, which is now founded on the diversity of laws. The same reason is directly applicable to the division between Social Physics and Physiology properly so called, in other words, between the Physiology of the Race and that of the Individual. The separation is, no doubt, much less marked, since the one is a secondary, the other a primary, division. But allowing for this difference of degree, there is a similar impossibility of deduction.

The total insufficiency of this deductive mode of proceeding can be easily verified if, in place of regarding it merely in relation to the theory of Positive Politics, we consider its bearing on the practical aim of this science, that is to say, the determination of the system in accordance with which society should now be reorganised.

No doubt we can demonstrate from physiological laws what is the general state of Civilisation most conformable to the nature of the human race. But it is evident from the preceding remarks that we cannot advance farther on this road. Such an idea taken by itself is merely speculative and cannot practically lead to any real and positive result. For it does not enable us to know positively how far the human race at present falls short of this point, the course that should be followed to reach it, or the general plan of social organisation corresponding thereto; all matters requiring a direct study of the History of Civilisation.

If, notwithstanding, we seek to give a practical basis to this speculative and incomplete conception, it becomes impossible to avoid the absolute. For the application of Social Science would thus consist in forming an unvarying type of vague perfection,

without any distinction of epochs, after the model of the conjectural Politics. The conditions by which the excellence of this type is determined are certainly much more positive than those which serve to guide Theological and Metaphysical Politics. But this does not change the absolute character inherent in such a problem, treat it as we may. Politics therefore can never become truly positive in this way.

Thus, whether from the theoretical or practical point of view, it is equally erroneous to conceive Social Science as simply a result of Physiology.

Physiology only the base and point of departure of Social Physics

The true and direct relation between the knowledge of the Human Organisation and Political Science, as characterised in this First Series, consists in the fact that the former supplies the latter with its point of departure.

To Physiology exclusively belongs the positive demonstration of those causes which render the human race competent to develop a constantly progressive Civilisation, so long as the condition of our planet opposes no insurmountable obstacle. Physiology alone can mark out the true character and the general course of this Civilisation. Lastly, it alone can throw light upon the formation of the primitive aggregations of men, and deduce the history of the childhood of our race down to the period when the first impulse to Civilisation was given by the creation of Language.

Here naturally stops the office of purely physiological considerations in relation to Social Physics, which should then be based solely on the immediate Observation of the progress of the Human Race. Beyond the point thus indicated the difficulty of deduction would surpass our forces, because thenceforward the advance of Civilisation becomes much more rapid, so that the number of phenomena requiring co-ordination suddenly aug-

ments On the other hand, the office which Physiology should perform in the study of the past of Society would no longer be necessary, or required to supply the want of direct observation. For, reckoning from the creation of language, immediate data for tracing the development of Civilisation exist, so that no gap occurs to mar the completeness of our conceptions

To obtain a complete view of the true office of Physiology in Social Physics we must add to the preceding remarks another consideration As Condorcet truly felt, the development of the Race—being only the resultant of the individual developments passing from one generation to another—should of necessity present a general likeness to the natural history of the Individual Owing to this analogy the study of man, considered by himself, supplies certain means of verification and reasoning, as regards that of the Race, of a kind distinct from those mentioned above, and these, though less important, have the advantage of embracing all epochs

Social Physics and Physiology are therefore distinct sciences

To sum up: although the Physiology of the Race and that of the Individual constitute two sciences exactly similar in kind, or, rather, two distinct portions of a single science, it is nevertheless indispensable to conceive and treat them separately It is necessary that the former should seek its basis and starting-point in the latter, if it would become truly positive But it should then be studied apart, and repose upon the direct observation of social phenomena

The attempt to place Social Physics exclusively in the domain of Physiology was natural, when no other way could be found of impressing the former with a positive character But this error would be without excuse now that we can easily satisfy

ourselves of the possibility of rendering Political Science positive, by basing it on the immediate observation of the History of Society

In the second place, at the epoch when the study of the intellectual and moral functions was transferred from the sphere of metaphysics to that of Physiology, it was difficult to avoid all exaggeration in ascertaining the true domain of Physiology and not to include in this the investigation of Social Phenomena The period of conquests cannot be that for assigning precise limits Accordingly, Cabanis, who was one of the chief co-operators in this great revolution, is specially excusable for his illusion on this head But now, when a severe analysis can and ought to succeed to the enthusiasm of the original impulse, nothing should any longer prevent our recognising the necessity for a division indispensably demanded by the weakness of the human intellect

No real ground now exists for isolating, in the study of the individual, the phenomena specially called moral from the rest The revolution which has bound them all together must be regarded as the most essential step that Physiology has yet made under the philosophical aspect

On the other hand, considerations of primary importance demonstrate the absolute necessity of separating the study of the Collective phenomena of the Human Race from that of the Individual phenomena , while establishing, nevertheless, the natural relations that exist between these two great sections of Physiology The endeavour to dispense with this necessary division would be an error, less serious indeed, but of the same sort as that so justly combated by true physiologists, which presents the study of living bodies as a mere consequence of, and appendix to, that of inorganic bodies

Such are the four chief attempts which have been made to raise Politics to the rank of the Sciences of Observation, and which, taken together, decisively prove the necessity and maturity of this great enterprise. Each, when specially examined from its own point of view, confirms the principles already set forth in this First Series as to the true mode of giving a positive character to Politics, and consequently of forming with certainty the general conception of the New Social System which can alone terminate the existing crisis of civilised Europe.

Social Physics a science based on the direct observation of the Collective Development of Mankind

We may then take it as demonstrated, both *a priori* and *a posteriori*, that this great result can only be attained by considering Social Physics as a special science based upon direct observation of the phenomena relative to the Collective Development of the Human Race Its aim must be the co-ordination of the social Past, and its result the determination of the system which the march of Civilisation tends to produce in our time.

This science of Social Physics is evidently as positive as any other science of observation, and its certainty is quite as real [1] The laws which it discovers being based on the ensemble of the observed phenomena, their application deserves our entire confidence

This science, like all others, possesses general

[1] Doubtless it is superfluous to refute the exaggerated objections presented by different authors, especially by Volney, against the certainty of historic facts. Even supposing these objections could be adopted to the extent urged by these writers, they would not in the least affect the most important and general facts, which alone need be considered in the study of Civilisation

resources for verification, even independently of its necessary relation with Physiology These resources are based on the fact that in the present condition of the human race, considered as a whole, all degrees of Civilisation co-exist on different points of the globe, from that of the New Zealand savages to that of the French and English Thus the connection established by the succession of epochs can be verified by a comparison of places

At first sight the new science seems to be reduced to simple Observation and wholly deprived of the help of Experiment, yet this, as Astronomy proves, would not prevent it from becoming positive But in Physiology, in addition to experiments on animals, pathological cases are really equivalent to direct experiment on man, because they change the habitual order of the phenomena In like manner, and for similar reasons, the various epochs when political combinations tended more or less to arrest the development of Civilisation should be regarded as real experiments in Social Physics, even better fitted than pure observation to manifest or confirm the natural laws which preside over the collective progress of mankind

Two classes of investigations necessary—general and special

If, as I venture to hope, the considerations submitted in this chapter convince scientific thinkers of the importance and possibility of founding positive Political Science in the sense indicated above, I shall then offer in greater detail my opinion on the mode of executing this First Series of operations But I deem it advisable now to recall the necessity for first dividing it into two kinds, the one embracing general conceptions, the other special investigations

The first kind of investigations should aim at

establishing the general progress of mankind, putting aside the various causes that may modify the rate at which Civilisation advances, and, consequently, all the differences between nations, however great these may be The second kind of investigations should aim at estimating the influence of these modifying elements, thus drawing the final picture in which each nation shall fill the special position appropriate to its own development

Both classes of investigations, but especially the latter, admit of various degrees of generality, the necessity for which will probably make itself apparent to men of science

The propriety of treating the first order of investigations before the second is based on the obvious principle—as applicable to the Physiology of the Race as to that of the Individual—that peculiarities should only be studied after establishing general laws If this rule were disregarded, we should be obliged to forgo the acquisition of any clear conception

The possibility of proceeding in this way results from the fact that an adequate number of special points have, in our day, been sufficiently investigated to allow of our attempting their general co-ordination Physiologists did not postpone the task of framing a conception of the ensemble of our organisation until all the special functions were known. It ought to be the same in Social Physics

Stating the foregoing considerations with more precision, we see that they tend to establish the necessity for proceeding from the General to the Special in forming Political Science. If we examine this precept closely, we shall easily recognise its truth]

In Inorganic Physics we usually proceed from the particular to the general, but in Organic Physics this procedure is reversed

The method pursued by the human mind in the investigation of the laws which govern natural phenomena, from the point of view we are now considering, presents an important difference, according as it occupies itself with the Physics of Inorganic or of Organic bodies

As regards the former branch, Man forms an imperceptible portion of an immense series of phenomena, the whole of which he can never, without the greatest presumption, hope to grasp. As soon, therefore, as he begins to study these in a positive spirit, he must consider the most special facts in order gradually to raise himself to the knowledge of some general laws, which in turn become the starting-point for fresh investigations On the other hand, in the Physics of Organised bodies, Man is himself the most complete type of the ensemble of the phenomena Hence his positive discoveries necessarily begin with the most general facts, which afford him an indispensable assistance in studying a class of details, the precise knowledge of which he is, by their nature, for ever precluded from ascertaining In a word, in both cases, the human intellect proceeds from the Known to the Unknown, but in the first case, it rises from the Special to the General, because the knowledge of details is more accessible to it than that of the whole, while in the second case, it begins by descending from the General to the Special, because it is more intimately acquainted with the whole than with the parts The perfecting of these two branches, in a philosophical sense, consists essentially in allowing each to adopt the method of the other, although the characteristic method must always have the preference in each case

Having considered this law from the highest

point of view which Positive Philosophy affords, it admits of an easy verification by observing the development of the Natural Sciences down to the present day, beginning with the moment when each of them definitely ceased to possess a theological or metaphysical character

In the study of Inorganic bodies, considering only its main divisions, we find Astronomy, Physics, and Chemistry at first quite isolated from each other, and afterwards becoming mutually related to such an extent that they now tend to become a single science In like manner, considering each branch apart, we trace it springing from the study of disconnected facts at first, and gradually reaching the generalisations now known It is only in Astronomy and some sections of Terrestrial Physics that the human mind has as yet succeeded, to any great extent, in following a different course It may even be said that in Astronomy the original course has only been altered by the law of universal gravitation in a secondary degree, as regards the ensemble of the phenomena, though in the most important way as regards ourselves For it has not yet embraced, and in all likelihood will never bring within the sphere of its applications, the most general astronomical facts, namely, the relations of the different solar systems, of which we as yet possess no knowledge This remark, concerning the most perfect branch of Inorganic Physics, offers a striking verification of the principle stated above

If we next examine the application of this principle to the study of living bodies, its confirmation is equally evident In the first place, the general relations that connect the component functions of an organism are now assuredly better understood than the partial activity of each organ In like manner, considered from a still more general

point of view, the study of the general relations that exist between the various organisms, whether animal or vegetable, is certainly more advanced than that of each special organism In the second place, the main branches of Organic Physics were at first confounded under one head Only in consequence of the progress of positive Physiology have we succeeded in analysing with precision the different general points of view under which a living body can be considered, so as to found a rational division of the science upon these distinctions. So certain is this that, having regard to the recent date when the Physics of Organised bodies really acquired a positive character, the distribution of its chief parts has not even yet been clearly settled The above view is still more apparent in reference to scientific men than to the sciences, since physiologists are evidently much less special in their investigations than the scientific men devoted to the study of inorganic bodies

We may, therefore, consider it established by observation and reasoning, that the human intellect usually advances from the Special to the General in Inorganic Physics, but on the contrary, from the General to the Special in Organic Physics; that, at all events, the sciences undoubtedly advance for a long while in this manner from the moment they assume a positive character

If, hitherto, the second part of this law has been ignored, if it has been assumed that in every kind of research, the human mind of necessity always proceeds from the Special to the General, this error admits of an easy explanation The Physics of Inorganic bodies having been, as was natural, first established, the precepts of Positive Philosophy were naturally based on the observation of

its progress But the continuance of this error would be inexcusable, now that philosophical observation can embrace both orders of natural sciences.

In Social Physics we must first co-ordinate the most general facts

Applying, then, to Social Physics, which is only a branch of Physiology, the principle just demonstrated, it proves that in studying the development of the Human Race we must commence by co-ordinating the most General facts, descending from these to deductions of increasing speciality But in order that there may be no uncertainty as to this essential point, we shall do well to verify the principle directly for this particular case

All historical works hitherto written, even the best of them, have merely had, and could only have, the character of *annals*, that is to say, they described in chronological order a certain series of special facts, more or less important and correct, but always isolated from each other No doubt considerations relating to the co-ordination and the filiation of political phenomena have not been wholly neglected, especially during the last half-century But it is clear that this introduction of new ideas has not yet remoulded the character of this sort of composition, which still bears the literary stamp [1] As yet there exists no true *history*, conceived in a scientific spirit, that is to say, aiming at the discovery of those laws which regulate the social development of the human race ,

[1] I am here only seeking to establish a fact, not to judge it Besides, I am quite convinced of the utility, and even of the absolute necessity, of this class of writings, considered as preliminary operations But it is quite certain that annals are no more history than collections of meteorological observations are physics.

which is the object of the series of investigations considered in this First Series.

The distinction pointed out above suffices to explain why it was almost universally believed up to the present time, that in History we should proceed from the Special to the General, and why, on the contrary, we ought now to proceed from the General to the Special, if we wish to obtain any results.

For when we only endeavour to frame with accuracy general *annals* of the Human Race, we should evidently begin by constructing those of the different nations, which in turn can only be founded on provincial and civic chronicles, or even on simple biographies. In like manner, in order to form complete annals of each portion of the population, it is indispensable to collect a series of separate documents relative to each point of view under which they ought to be considered. In this way we ought, unquestionably, to proceed, in order to collect the general facts that form the materials of Political Science, or, rather, the objects with which its combinations are concerned But a wholly opposite course becomes indispensable as soon as we aim at the direct formation of the science, that is to say, the study of the connection between the phenomena.

In truth, from their very nature, all kinds of Social phenomena develop themselves simultaneously and under the influence of each other, so that it is absolutely impossible to explain the course pursued by any of them, without having first formed a General conception of the progress of the whole

For example, everyone knows in our day, that the reciprocal action of the different European States is too important to allow of their histories being really separated. But the same impossibility

is not less apparent in reference to the different kinds of political facts subsisting in a separate society Is there not a manifest connection between the advance of one science or art and that of the other sciences or arts? Is not the progress of the study of Nature related to that of our command over Nature? Are not both intimately bound up with the condition of the social organisation, and reciprocally? Therefore, in order to ascertain with precision the real laws affecting the development of the simplest branch of society, we ought to reach the same degree of precision for all the rest, which is evidently absurd

On the contrary, we should make it our primary aim to conceive, in its greatest generality, the Development of the Human Race, that is to say, to observe and connect with each other the most important advances it has successively made in different directions Next, we should endeavour gradually to impart to this picture an increasing degree of precision, subdividing more and more the intervals of observation and the classes of phenomena to be observed In like manner, from a practical point of view, the picture of our social future, at first determined in a general manner by a primary study of the Past, will become more and more detailed, in proportion as our knowledge of the antecedent progress of the Human Race increases The final perfection of the science—one which in all likelihood will never be completely attained—would consist, as regards Theory, in conceiving with precision the Filiation which, from the commencement, connects the advances made by each generation with those of the preceding and succeeding generations, embracing the entire body politic, every science, art, and portion of the political organisation As regards Practice, such perfection would consist

in a rigorous determination, embracing every essential detail, of that system which the natural progress of Civilisation ought to produce

Such is the method strictly prescribed by the nature of Social Physics

FOURTH ESSAY

(*November* 1825)

PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE SCIENCES AND MEN OF SCIENCE

The Law of the Three Intellectual States

In whatever way we study the general development of the human intellect, whether according to the rational method or empirically, we discover, despite all seeming irregularities, a fundamental Law to which its progress is necessarily and invariably subjected This Law consists in the fact that the intellectual system of man, and every portion of it, necessarily passes through three successive phases, the Theological, the Metaphysical, and the Positive or Scientific. Thus man began by considering phenomena of every kind as due to the direct and continuous influence of supernatural agents, he next regarded them as products of different abstract forces, residing in the bodies, but distinct and heterogeneous, while he ends by viewing them as subjected to a certain number of natural and invariable laws, which are merely the general expression of the relations observed in their development

All who have adequately studied the state of the human mind at the various Epochs of Civilisation will easily verify the correctness of this general statement A very simple observation suffices to guide us to this verification now that the

revolution has been effected in reference to the larger portion of our ideas. The education of the individual, so far as this is spontaneous, necessarily presents the same essential phases as that of the race and vice versa Now, at the present day everyone who is on a level with his time can easily see, by his own experience, that he was during his infancy a theologian, in his youth a metaphysician, and has become a scientific thinker in his mature age The history of the sciences proves directly that the same has taken place in reference to the whole human race But in addition to this fact, it is possible to explain why the formation of human ideas necessarily followed this course

In order to comprehend this inevitable evolution, we must consider the above Law, like all other social facts, from a twofold point of view, under the physical aspect, as being inevitable and flowing from the natural laws of human organisation, and under the moral aspect, as being indispensable and constituting the only mode adapted to the development of the human mind

The Theological Method an inevitable consequence of the nature of the human mind

Under the first of these aspects the Law is easily intelligible

A natural and irresistible instinct disposes the human race to adopt Theological before reaching Scientific philosophy. The personal action exerted by man on other beings is the only kind of which he comprehends the *modus operandi*, through his consciousness of it He is thus led to conceive in an analogous way the reaction which external bodies exert upon himself, and likewise the action they exert upon each other, of which he can only see the results At all events, he must conceive them in this way until the progress of observation has revealed the striking differences

that separate these phenomena from his own. If, subsequently, he alters his conceptions on this subject, it is only because, having been disabused by experience and reflection of his original illusions, he entirely renounces the attempt to penetrate the mystery which envelops the mode of producing phenomena,—all knowledge of their nature being for ever inaccessible to him,—for the mere observation of their effective laws. Even at the present time, after all our advance in positive notions, if we endeavoured, in reference to the simplest phenomena, to understand how the fact we name a *cause* engenders the other fact we name an *effect*, we should be unavoidably compelled to resort to images analogous to those which served as the basis of the primitive human theories; as Barthez, generalising an idea of Hume, has judiciously remarked

Man, then, necessarily begins by regarding all the bodies which attract his attention as so many living beings, animated with a life resembling his own, but generally superior, by reason of the greater power of most of them Afterwards, continued observation leads man to convert this primitive hypothesis into another less enduring one, that, namely, of a dead nature guided by a larger or smaller number of invisible superhuman agents, distinct and independent of one another, corresponding in attributes and authority to the kind and extent of the phenomena attributed to their agency This theory, originally applied only to the phenomena of external bodies, is at a subsequent period extended even to those of man and society, when the range of thought has embraced these Then it is that Theological Philosophy begins to acquire real consistency and to influence powerfully the progress of the human mind.

Passage from the Theological to the Positive Method

But the inevitable and continued improvement of our knowledge of Nature before long modifies and eventually destroys this system

In truth, man has never been entirely in the Theological condition Some phenomena have always existed, so simple and regular that, from the first, he could only consider them as subjected to natural laws, in the way which Adam Smith has well explained [1] But such phenomena were at the outset neither the most numerous nor the most important As to other phenomena, it may be said that man had recourse to theological explanations only so long as scientific conceptions were impossible Whenever they became attainable, he adopted them exclusively.

The first effect of the progress of Observation was to dispose the human mind gradually to reduce the number of supernatural agents, attributing to one the functions which originally demanded several, according as the relations of phenomena acquired greater generality This result, pushed as far as possible, finally simplified the Theological System so far as to reduce it to Unity

From this period, the continuous action of the same principle which at first guided the human mind from Fetichism to Polytheism, and finally from Polytheism to Theism, led it to confine the direct intervention of the great supernatural cause within limits more and more narrow, always

[1] See in his posthumous works the *Philosophical Essay on the History of Astronomy* This work, too little known on the Continent, and generally insufficiently appreciated, is more positive in its character than the other productions of Scotch philosophy, those of Hume excepted Remarkable in its day, it may even yet be studied with great advantage

reserving its application for those phenomena whose laws remained unknown. As to all other phenomena, when the discovery of their laws permitted their accurate prediction, and consequently allowed man to regulate them more completely than theological theories could do, he discontinued more and more the employment of these in his habitual speculations, and resorted increasingly to the conceptions which ministered more completely to his two great necessities—Foresight and Action Finally, from the time that natural conceptions acquired sufficient extension and generality (that is to say, in our own day), and embraced in their essentials all the objects of investigation really accessible to us, the human intellect, extending analogically to all phenomena, even the unknown, what had only been verified for a certain number, considered all of them as subject to scientific laws, the discovery of which, with increasing accuracy, became thenceforward the only reasonable object of our speculative labours From that time, the Theological Method, which had not entirely ceased to be employed, was considered as inapplicable to our investigations, and the Positive Method began exclusively to direct the action of our intelligence.

Necessity for the Theological Method as a provisional mode of theorising

Having thus considered this great revolution as inevitable, it is necessary to explain why it was indispensable to the development of the human reason The Positive Method has in our day obtained so complete an ascendancy over the intellect that we find a difficulty in understanding why the Theological and Metaphysical philosophies were at any period useful, far less necessary, as instruments of research. They, but especially the former, are almost universally regarded as aber-

rations of the intellect, even by the small number of thinkers who perceive that they were unavoidable. It is, then, necessary to rectify our conceptions on this important point, since, if it be not explained, we should understand the Law of the succession of the Three Philosophies very imperfectly, and in a way to limit greatly the extent and value of its applications. It is, without doubt, important to prove that the human mind has not continued down to our time in an insane condition, and that at each epoch it has constantly employed that method which was most favourable to its progress, at least as regards the general scope of its efforts.

Assuredly it cannot now be denied that Observation of facts is the only solid basis for human knowledge. Taking this principle in its most rigorous sense, we may say with strict truth that a proposition which does not admit of being reduced to a simple enunciation of fact, special or general, can have no real or intelligible sense. But it is no less certain that the development of the Imagination must precede that of Observation. The causes which necessitate this order in the education of the individual render it still more indispensable in that of the race.

The Positive Method is the safest and even the only safe one; but it is, at the same time, the slowest, and for this reason quite unsuitable to the infancy of the human mind. If this be appreciably felt even when our intelligence has long been in full activity, we can easily see that it must have been so much more decidedly at the period of our earliest efforts. The mere possibility of such a method presupposes a prolonged series of observations, because the most elementary natural laws always demand most time for their discovery. On the other hand, whatever may be

asserted to the contrary, pure empiricism is impossible. Unless man connects facts with some explanation, he is naturally incapable, not merely of combining and making deductions from them, but even of observing and recollecting them. In a word, it is as impossible to make continuous observations without a theory of some kind, as to construct a positive theory without continuous observations. It is, therefore, plain that the human mind would have unavoidably remained in a perpetual torpor, had it been compelled to defer all reasoning about phenomena until their relations, and the mode of investigating them, could be derived from Observation. Accordingly, the earliest advances of the human intellect could not be effected in any other way than by the Theological Method, the only one susceptible of spontaneous development. It alone possessed the important property of presenting from the outset a provisional theory, vague and arbitrary, it is true, but direct and easy, which immediately grouped the primary facts and, by cultivating our faculties of Observation, prepared the advent of a wholly positive Philosophy.

Were it possible here to enter into some details on this great subject, we should see clearly that the Theological Philosophy, as a whole, not only was indispensable for preparing the development of the Positive Method, but that its various improvements, the result of accumulating observations, by a necessary reaction contributed much to accelerate these. To mention only the most remarkable example, it is evident that unless Polytheism had risen to Theism, natural theories could never have developed themselves. This admirable simplification of Theological Philosophy reduced the action of the chief supernatural power, in each special case, to a certain general

direction, the character of which was unavoidably vague Thus the human mind was authorised, and even strongly impelled, to study the physical laws of each class of phenomena, regarded as a mode of action of this power On the contrary, before this epoch, since the positive investigation of even the simplest phenomena encountered so many special and detailed theological explanations, every scientific inquirer was unavoidably an irreligious person

Theological Philosophy specially adapted to primitive mental requirements

The necessity for pursuing this course becomes still more evident if we consider that the Theological Philosophy was not merely the only one possible, but the only one adapted to the nature of those researches which necessarily first engaged the human mind

Except by experience, based on the very exercise of his faculties, man could not learn their true limits Originally he is always disposed to over-estimate their extent This disposition is at that time singularly strengthened by his ignorance of natural laws, which gives rise to the hope of exercising over Nature a power, so to speak, unbounded In this mental state, the only investigations which seem worthy of seriously occupying the human intellect are those relating to the origin and end of the universe and all its phenomena In truth, these alone are fitted to do so. At first we are amazed to find such temerity united to such profound ignorance Further reflection, however, shows us the impossibility of supplying a motive sufficiently energetic to engage and sustain the human intellect at its earliest stage in theoretical researches, without the powerful attraction inspired by these vast problems that seem to comprehend all others,

and also without the chimerical hopes of indefinite power connected with their solution. Kepler had a lively sense of this necessity as regards Astrology in connection with Astronomy, and Berthollet has made the same remark as to Alchemy in reference to Chemistry But let the explanation have what value it may, the fact, itself incontestable, suffices to prove how completely the Theological Philosophy is alone adapted to the primitive condition of the human intellect For the essential feature of Positive Philosophy is precisely that of regarding all these great questions as insoluble by the human mind Interdicting our intelligence from all inquiries into the first and final causes of phenomena, it confines its operations to the discovery of their actual relations. It is, therefore, evident that had it even been possible, at the outset, to choose between these two methods, the human mind would not have hesitated to reject with disdain that which, promising little and in its nature slow, harmonises badly with the extent and eagerness of our intellectual needs in their earliest stage.

Theological Method necessitated also by early social conditions

The preceding reflections, therefore, prove that, having regard only to the Philosophic conditions of the development of the human mind, it was long necessary to employ the Theological method before taking for our guidance the Positive method But this necessity becomes still more evident if we also take into account Social conditions, no less indispensable than the former for the intellectual growth of mankind.

The spiritual development of man apart from his temporal development, that is to say, the progress of the intellect apart from that of society, can only be separately studied by a mental abstraction ; for these two movements, though distinct, are not

independent, but on the contrary, exercise a reciprocal influence indispensable to each of them.

It is not sufficient to state the general proposition that the cultivation of the intelligence is only possible in society, and by society. We should also recognise that the nature and extent of social relations at each epoch determine the character and rate of our spiritual progress, and reciprocally. For example, everyone now knows that no real and durable progress of the human mind is conceivable in a condition of society where each person is constantly obliged to provide his own subsistence. For in that state there can be no separation of Theory and Practice, the primary condition of mental development. But among pastoral, and even among agricultural, populations whose mode of living has overcome the original obstacle, this fundamental condition is often far from being realised. It is further necessary that the Social Organisation should be sufficiently advanced to allow of the regular establishment of a class of men who, being freed from the cares of material production and of war, can dedicate themselves uninterruptedly to the contemplation of Nature. In a word, in this respect, as in many others of no less importance, the formation of human science presupposes a complex state of society. But, on the other hand, no real and coherent society can form and maintain itself except under the influence of some system of ideas, fitted to surmount the opposition of individualising tendencies, always so strong at the outset, and to make these concur in maintaining a settled order. This essential function could, therefore, only be fulfilled by a philosophic theory which should dispense with that slow preliminary elaboration necessary for the development of real knowledge, but demanding the pro-

longed duration of a regular and complete political order. Such is the admirable character of the Theological Philosophy, as distinguished from all others. To it we must naturally ascribe the original establishment of all Social Organisation. Deprived of the powerful and happy influence which it alone can exert on men in the infancy of nations, we can imagine no permanent social classification fitted to sustain and stimulate, up to a certain point, the advance of the human faculties. From the point of view which we are now considering, what other influence but that of theological doctrines could, in the midst of a population of warriors and slaves, admit of and maintain the existence of a corporation simply occupied with intellectual labours, far less secure to it a preponderance alike indispensable to its earliest operations and to the stability of society?

Necessity of the Metaphysical as a Transitional Method.

Thus, having regard to the conditions, whether Intellectual or Social, of the development of the human intellect, we find that its activity necessarily began with Theological philosophy, before reaching Positive philosophy. It is easy to demonstrate, with equal certainty, that the human mind could only pass from one to the other by employing the Metaphysical philosophy.

Theological and Positive conceptions are too heterogeneous, nay too antagonistic, to allow of our intelligence—which only advances by almost imperceptible degrees—passing from one to the other without intermediate steps. Such intermediate steps have been, and could only be, Metaphysical conceptions. These, belonging at once to Theology and Science, or, rather, being nothing but the former modified by the latter, are by their very nature eminently fitted to fulfil this function, in which all their utility consists.

Theological Philosophy, placing itself at the prime source of all phenomena, is essentially occupied in unfolding their efficient causes, while Positive Philosophy—laying aside all search after *causes*, as being inaccessible to the human mind—is exclusively occupied in discovering *laws*, that is to say, the constant relations of similitude and succession which subsist between facts Between these two points of view is naturally interposed the Metaphysical, which regards each phenomenon as the product of an abstract force peculiar to itself This method is valuable from the facility it gives for reasoning on phenomena without directly considering supernatural causes, which the human mind was thus enabled gradually to eliminate from its combinations.

In point of fact, it is by such a process that this change has been effected in all intellectual departments As soon as the progress of Observation enabled man to generalise and simplify his theological conceptions, in each class of phenomena the primitive Supernatural Agent was replaced by a corresponding Entity, to which thenceforward attention was exclusively directed. These entities were, at first, a kind of emanation from the supreme power But, thanks to their indeterminate character, they were finally attenuated so as to be no longer regarded as anything but abstract names for phenomena This transformation took place in proportion as the increase of natural knowledge manifested the emptiness of such a mode of explaining facts, and at the same time permitted the substitution of another for it. Thus Metaphysics became a mode of transition, at once natural and indispensable, from Theology to Science Its triumph is, on one hand, the unmistakable sign, on the other, the direct cause, of the decline of the former and the rise of the latter

Theology and Metaphysics were of only temporary use. The Final Method is the Positive

The above considerations clearly prove that Theological and Metaphysical theories constituted an indispensable preparation for the human mind, but they also show that these doctrines could have had no other destination, since their development has only been a continuous and progressive advance towards positive theories. Their very fitness as guides for the infancy of human reason renders them powerless as guides for its mature state. Once the intellect really abandons a mode of theorising, it is never again taken up. The vigour and influence of a method should be measured by the number and importance of its applications. Methods which produce no results are soon entirely abandoned. Now, seeing that for at least two centuries past, those Theological and Metaphysical methods which presided over our earliest intellectual efforts have become entirely sterile; seeing that the most extensive and important discoveries, those which do most honour to the human mind, have since this epoch, entirely resulted from the employment of the Positive Method, this fact alone clearly proves that to the latter must henceforward belong the exclusive direction of human thought.[1]

While rendering full justice to the important and innumerable services of every kind heretofore rendered by Theology and Metaphysics, it cannot be concealed that our intellect is not destined to compose theogonies indefinitely, or for ever to content itself with logomachies. To acquire the

[1] Already at the end of the sixteenth century Bacon compared theological conceptions to virgins consecrated to the Lord, who had become sterile. In our time, he would assuredly have extended the comparison to metaphysical conceptions, the sterility of which is equally evident.

most exact and complete knowledge attainable of the Laws of Nature, and thus to discover the influence which the Human Race is destined to exercise over the external World, are the true and constant objects of the efforts of human genius, when its preparatory education has terminated Positive philosophy is, then, the definitive state of man, and should only cease with the activity of our intelligence The interest with which it inspires us, its perfect harmony with our spiritual wants, are such that, from the time of its earliest formation by the discovery of some great laws, the most distinguished intellects renounce, with singular facility, the seductive hopes of an absolute and transcendental knowledge offered by Theology and Metaphysics, and seek with ardour the pure intellectual satisfaction attached to real and precise Science In our day it is doubtless unnecessary to insist much on proofs of a tendency which manifests itself at every moment and in a thousand ways, even in the least advanced minds Wherever positive conceptions have been placed in competition with mystical and vague conceptions, disgust with the latter has speedily manifested itself [1]

[1] Language which, historically considered, presents a faithful picture of mental evolution furnishes us with clear proof of this The word *science*, which at first was applied only to theological and metaphysical speculations, and subsequently to the researches of pure erudition which they engendered, in our day, when employed without qualification, imports, even in common acceptation, only the positive branches of knowledge Whenever another signification is sought to be imposed upon this word, it becomes necessary to have recourse to periphrases, the use of which clearly proves that, in the view of the existing public, true *knowledge* consists in *science* alone

From the considerations, then, indicated above, results the demonstration, theoretical and experimental, of the general fact enunciated at first the human intellect naturally passes successively, in every department of its activity, through three different theoretic phases—the Theological state, the Metaphysical state, and the Positive state. Of these the first is provisional, the second transitory, and the third final

This fundamental Law should henceforth be, in my opinion, the starting-point of all philosophical researches about Man and Society

Inasmuch as the Theological and Metaphysical doctrines still preserve some activity, or at least considerable influence, it is evident that this important revolution is not terminated To what extent is it so? What remains to complete its accomplishment? These points have now to be investigated

The present is not the place for explaining by what series of operations so great a change has been produced It is sufficient to fix our ideas by noting a fact It is to the movement of the human intellect, determined by the precepts of Bacon, the conceptions of Descartes, and the discoveries of Galileo,—a movement which was itself only the final and inevitable result of all the anterior labours,—that we must refer the direct origin of a truly Positive Philosophy, that is to say, of a philosophy wholly disengaged from that Theological and Metaphysical alloy which had before that time more or less debased natural theories

During the two centuries elapsed since this memorable epoch the various branches of knowledge have at last reached the Positive state But if, for our present object, it is of little consequence how this transformation has been effected, it is, on the other hand, very important to remark

carefully in what order our different kinds of ideas have been transformed, since this notion is absolutely necessary for completing our knowledge of the above Law

On this head a very simple and natural course is observable

The Classification of the Sciences

Our different conceptions have successively become Positive in the same order in which they became, first Theological, then Metaphysical. This order corresponds to the degree of facility which the study of the corresponding phenomena presents. It is determined by their greater or less complication, their greater or less dependence, their degree of speciality, and their more or less direct connection with Man—four grounds which, though each exerts its distinct influence, are at bottom inseparable Here, then, we have the Classification which is dictated by the nature of the phenomena, such as we now know them to be.

Astronomical phenomena are at once the most simple, the most general, and the most remote from Man, they influence all the rest without being influenced by them, at least in any degree appreciable by us, they obey one law only, the most universal in nature, that of gravitation After them come the phenomena of Terrestrial Physics, properly so called, which are controlled by the preceding class and also obey special laws more limited in their results Next come Chemical phenomena, dependent on both of the preceding, in which we discover a fresh series of laws, concerning affinities, less extensive in their range. Lastly come Physiological phenomena, in which we observe all the laws of Physics, Celestial and Terrestrial, and of Chemistry, but modified by other laws peculiar to themselves, the sphere of which is still more limited

From this simple exposition it follows that our conceptions, assuming one or other of the three general forms described above, may have acquired a considerable extension in reference to the inferior portions of the Encyclopædic Scale without having developed themselves in reference to the higher The former conceptions are independent of the latter, while, on the other hand, they cannot have been formed as to the higher phenomena, without having first acquired a certain degree of consistency with respect to the lower, the influence of which must unavoidably be taken into account in every theory This Classification, therefore, inevitably determines the order of development of each of the Three Philosophies. The facts are in accordance with this theory, as it is easy to verify The verification is more particularly easy as regards the Positive Philosophy, the recent formation of which, being naturally slower, presents more distinct intervals

Observing from this point of view, the progress of the human mind during the last two centuries, we perceive that Astronomy was the first to become a positive science, then Physics, next Chemistry, and, lastly, in our own time, Physiology Such is the present condition of intellectual development

Intellectual and moral phenomena

In order to ascertain with the necessary precision the exact state which this great revolution has reached, we must, as regards the last science, distinguish between the portion which concerns the Intellectual and Affective functions and that which embraces the other Organic functions

Moral phenomena were the latest of all to pass out of the domain of Theology and Metaphysics and enter into that of Science This was, doubtless, conformable to the Encyclopædic Scale just

laid down. But if this circumstance makes the transformation less apparent in reference to these phenomena, the fact is no less real, though as yet unobserved by the majority of thinking people. All who are truly on a level with their age are aware that physiologists in our day study Moral phenomena exactly in the same spirit as the other phenomena of animal life. Extensive labours have been undertaken in this direction, and pursued with ardour for the last twenty years; positive conceptions, more or less fruitful, have sprung up; schools have spontaneously arisen to develop and propagate such ideas; in a word, all the signs of human activity have unequivocally revealed themselves in reference to Cerebral Physiology. It would serve no purpose here to take a side for or against any of the views which divide opinion, as to the kind, number, extent, and reciprocal influence of the organs assignable to the various functions, whether intellectual or affective. No doubt, on these points the science has not yet been definitely constructed: only some generalities, inadequate though very valuable, have been solidly established. But the very existence of this diversity of theory, evincing an uncertainty unavoidable in every young science, clearly proves that the great philosophic revolution has been accomplished for this branch of our knowledge, as for all others, at least in the intellectual vanguard of the human race, whose example is, sooner or later, followed by the masses. For amidst these divergencies, the Positive Method is recognised on all hands as alone admissible. Everyone recognises that the only legitimate aim is the combination of the anatomical with the physiological point of view. Theology and metaphysics are by common consent eliminated from the question; at least, they never play any

important part, and, whatever may be the final result of the discussion, it can only diminish their influence In a word, these discussions being confined within the domain of science, philosophy[1] has no further concern with them

I have particularly insisted on this last philosophical fact for two reasons First, because it has hitherto been hardly observed and has not unfrequently been disputed Secondly, because it furnishes to everyone who has rightly comprehended my Classification of the Sciences, at once a new proof, indirect, indeed, but unanswerable, and a precise summary of the whole of the great intellectual transformation

Social Physics needed to complete the Natural Sciences

Having thus shown by facts the point which the formation of the Positive Philosophy has now reached, we must consider what remains to be done for its completion

The natural series of phenomena furnishes, so to speak, of itself the reply to this question

The four great classes of observation already established do not embrace, at least in express terms, all the points of view under which existing beings can be considered We evidently miss the Social point of view as regards beings which can be so treated, and especially Man It is, however, equally clear that this omission is the only one. Thus we already possess Celestial Physics; Terrestrial Physics, Mechanical and Chemical, Vegetable Physics, Animal Physics We still need an additional science,—Social Physics,—in order to complete the Natural Sciences This condition once fulfilled, we can, summing up all our various conceptions, at last construct a truly Positive Philosophy, capable of satisfying every

[1] [i e, theological and metaphysical philosophy]

real requirement of our intelligence. Thenceforward the human intellect will be no longer obliged to recur on any subject to the Theological or the Metaphysical method, which, having lost all their utility, will cease to exist, except historically In a word, mankind will then have entirely completed its intellectual education, and can directly pursue its final destination

Such are the important considerations which it is now my duty to develop

Nature of Social Physics

My present limits do not permit me to characterise completely the spirit and method which specially appertain to this last branch of Natural Philosophy. To prevent all confusion I will simply say that I understand *Social Physics* to mean that science which occupies itself with the study of Social phenomena,[1] considered in the same light as Astronomical, Physical, Chemical, and Physiological phenomena, that is to say, as being subject to natural and invariable Laws, the discovery of which is the special object of its researches Thus it directly seeks to *explain*, as precisely as possible, the great phenomenon of the development of the human race under all its essential aspects, that is, to discover by what necessary chain of successive transformations the human race, start-

[1] Social phenomena, as belonging to man, are no doubt included under Physiological phenomena. For this reason, Social Physics must necessarily start from individual Physiology and maintain continual relations with this science Nevertheless, the former must be considered and cultivated as an entirely distinct science, by reason of the progressive influence of human generations upon each other This influence, which in Social Physics is the preponderating consideration, cannot be rightly studied from the purely physiological point of view

ing from a condition barely superior to that of a society of great apes, has been gradually led up to the present stage of European civilisation The essence of this science consists in regarding the thorough study of the Past as furnishing the true explanation of the Present and a general indication of the Future Always considering social facts, not as subjects for admiration or criticism, but as subjects for observation, this science alone concerns itself with establishing their mutual relations, and appreciating the influence which each exerts on human development as a whole In reference to practice, Social Science, setting aside all absolute ideas of good or evil institutions, considers them as being always relative to a definite condition of society and varying with it At the same time, it considers them as always capable of springing up spontaneously by the mere force of their antecedents, independently of any direct political intervention Its applications, therefore, simply aim at a demonstration of the various tendencies peculiar to each Epoch, in accordance with the natural Laws of Civilisation and direct observation These general results become in their turn the positive starting-point for the labours of the statesman He seeks simply to discover and institute the practical forms which correspond to these fundamental conditions, in order to avoid, or, at least, to soften as much as possible, the more or less serious crises that spring out of the natural course of events, when this has not been anticipated In a word, in this as in every other order of phenomena, Science leads to Foresight, and Foresight allows us to regulate Action

Its Fundamental Principle

In order to make this general view really useful, I must add to the above description, unavoidably imperfect,

of the nature of Social Science, a concise statement of the fundamental principle which distinguishes the special Method characteristic of this science It is this: the intellect, in investigating Social Laws, must proceed from the General to the Special, that is to say, must begin by apprehending in its ensemble the entire development of the human race, distinguishing at the commencement only a very small number of successive stages Afterwards it must gradually descend, increasing the number of intermediate steps, with ever-increasing precision, the natural limit of which would be the interval of a single generation in the co-ordination of the terms of this great series Such a mode of proceeding is essentially common to all parts of the Physics of Organised bodies, but it is peculiarly necessary in Social Physics [1]

Social Physics hitherto unattainable

Such, then, so far as I can here point out, is the nature of the new science, destined to complete the system of our positive knowledge. After giving this explanation, which I consider indispensable in order to fix our ideas, it is easy to explain why this last branch of Natural Philosophy could not be sooner constituted, and why also it must inevitably begin in our time

Social theories, even regarded under a purely philosophical aspect, necessarily preserved longer than the rest the Theological and Metaphysical charac-

[1] In fact, the nature of Social Physics may be easily apprehended if we consider it as established by the fundamental Law expounded above For on this supposition the science has already come into existence The discovery of this Law, its truth being admitted, constitutes the first direct step in Social Physics, since it presents a primary link of the most general description between the phenomena of Society

the temperature of the globe, and, as a probable consequence, the duration of human life, or let us suppose many other similar modifications, of very small moment astronomically speaking, it is manifest that the course of human development would then have differed widely from its actual one We can easily multiply similar hypotheses, of every sort, adapted to exhibit the real interdependence of the various order of phenomena They will readily show that the conditions of existence of human societies are in a necessary and continuous relation, not only, as is evident, with all the laws of our organisation, but with all the physical or chemical laws of our planet, and those of the solar system of which it forms a part So intimate is this relation that, if any important change arose in even one of those numberless influences of every kind under the absolute dominion of which our societies exist, the development of the human race would be profoundly changed, even assuming the absence of any variations which might affect its existence

It is, therefore, evident that Social phenomena by their very nature could not be reduced to positive theories before a similar revolution had been effected for Astronomical, Physical, Chemical, and Physiological phenomena Seeing that such a transformation has only been effected in reference to these last in our time, and is hardly yet commenced for Moral phenomena, the theory of which is indispensable to Social Physics, it is easy to understand why this science has been hitherto unattainable

This explanation becomes still clearer if we consider another circumstance altogether peculiar to Social phenomena In truth, their positive study became possible only when the growth of the human race had reached a stage sufficiently

advanced to disclose some natural laws of succession. If we endeavour to measure the influence of this condition, it seems to me that the experiential basis of Social Physics could not have been sufficiently extensive, had it not embraced the entire development of the human race down to our time. This conjecture is demonstrable to all who admit the above stated Law, for this law could not manifest itself until the revolution it involved had been entirely undergone by the human mind, in reference to the greater part of our ideas Now, this brings us exactly to the epoch already indicated on other grounds.

This new Science now attainable and inevitable

The same considerations which explain the causes that have hitherto hindered the Positive Method from extending itself to social theories prove, with equal force, that this latter part of the great intellectual renovation should necessarily be effected in our day.

The human intellect constantly tends towards Unity of Method and Doctrine, this is its regular and permanent condition, every other being only transitory. We cannot employ habitually a certain method in the greater part of our combinations, without finally either renouncing it entirely or extending it to all the rest The latter supposition is alone possible as regards methods whose superiority has been established by experience It would, therefore, be inconsistent to suppose that the human mind, after having raised itself to the power of reasoning in a positive way upon all Astronomical, Physical, Chemical, and Physiological phenomena, should always continue to reason theologically and metaphysically as regards Social phenomena Whoever has studied the intellectual nature of man will feel that it cannot be so Inevitably, therefore, it

must happen either that Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, and Physiology will again become metaphysical, and even theological, an absurd supposition ; or that Politics will become Positive, a proposition assuredly certain

A philosopher of the nineteenth century who more than any other fathomed the nature of the former condition of the human race, M. de Maistre, felt deeply the necessity for this alternative He saw clearly that the development of the Natural Sciences tended radically to destroy the rule of Theology and Metaphysics. He realised that in order to be truly consistent in his regret for the decline of the Old System, intellectual and social, he must boldly ascend to those ancient times when mental Unity was achieved by subordinating all our conceptions to supernatural philosophy.[1]

Doubtless, seeing that all the positive sciences could not be simultaneously constituted, periods more or less prolonged must have existed, during which the human mind employed at one and the same time each of the Three Methods for a certain order of ideas [2] Metaphysical philosophy, according

[1] Among other passages, see in the *Soirées de Saint-Pétersbourg* a very remarkable comparison between the character of Ancient and that of Modern Science

[2] This temporary and unavoidable confusion is the chief difficulty in verifying the Law above expounded But the difficulty will disappear if we remember the Encyclopædic Classification already established, and observe that the three methods have never been simultaneously employed in reference to the same order of ideas.

Within my experience the fact of this Coexistence of the Three Methods is, in truth, the only serious objection hitherto made to this fundamental Law. Moreover, this objection has never been presented by any but persons who, though intellectually able, were unacquainted with the positive sciences

to its practice, converting a transitory state into an immutable principle, has established as a maxim, a fundamental and absolute division between Theological and Positive Method, under the abstract names of Faith and Reason. But experience clearly proves that this doctrine has served no other purpose than that of extending the domain of Reason at the expense of that of Faith; and this, in truth, constituted the natural office of this Transitional Method, itself long useful In spite of this eternal truce between Theology and Science, the latter has always tended more and more to invade the entire system of our ideas, and its power in that direction has increased in proportion to the conquests already effected As nothing now remains to be mastered by the Positive Method but Social ideas, it is evident that it must end by embracing these also within its dominion, and that at no distant period, if we consider the immense power it holds by its exclusive dominion over all other classes of ideas.

The inference drawn from this consideration respecting Unity becomes still more apparent when we examine the formation of the Theological or Metaphysical theory of Social phenomena

The superficial philosophy of the Eighteenth Century generally represented the theological doctrine of society as the work of unbelieving legislators, who saw in it an instrument of domination Without insisting here on the revolting absurdity of such an hypothesis, which it is no longer necessary to refute, experience shows us that Theological Philosophy, in conformity with the general Law of Development established at the beginning of this essay, extended itself to Social phenomena, and consequently became an instrument of organisation, simply through the empire which it had at first acquired by affording an

explanation of external Nature and of Man himself This explanation furnished the origin and fundamental condition of the general supremacy obtained by the Theological System The same relation is always observable in the various forms which it successively assumes For example, is it not apparent that, the human intellect having once risen to the idea of one great supernatural cause producing all the phenomena of the external world and the phenomena of individual man, it could not but extend the same doctrine to the direction of societies? The same thing occurred when human conceptions became metaphysical So soon as this transformation had taken place as to astronomical, physical, chemical, and physiological ideas, its prompt extension to social ideas might be foreseen There is a connection, profound, though indirect, between the conceptions of Aristotle about Terrestrial and Celestial Physics, the Scholastic Doctrines of the Middle Age, and the Social Contract of Rousseau The spirit is the same, extending itself to a new order of ideas Therefore, since social theories have in fact always stood in close and necessary relation with those which concern other phenomena, since, again, the transformations that have hitherto affected the former have always corresponded to those experienced by the latter, the same course must repeat itself,—and that still more decidedly by reason of the greater discordance of methods,—as regards the advent of the Positive spirit which, having embraced the phenomena of Nature, must inevitably extend itself to Social phenomena

In truth, all the symptoms, general or special, which could mark such a revolution, have manifested themselves with an energy which leaves no doubt of its speedy accomplishment

The absolute preponderance obtained during the last century by Metaphysical Philosophy, in the region of Social ideas, is an incontrovertible sign of the complete decline of Theology. On the other hand, the profound disgust generally displayed towards Metaphysical Politics since the experience of the French Revolution, without, however, reviving the ascendancy of theological doctrines, is no less certainly an indication of the approaching formation of a Positive Politics, alone capable of obtaining a universal assent from minds which will no more submit to the dominion of abstractions than to the authority of oracles, and refuse to yield any longer to aught but the force of facts

Previous attempts to found Social Science

We may even say that direct attempts, more or less complete, have already been made by the most distinguished thinkers to satisfy this new need of the human mind Such, essentially, is the character of the works of the great Montesquieu First in his work on the Romans, but above all in the *Spirit of Laws*, he endeavoured to connect political phenomena with each other and to seize the laws of their interdependence This attempt was, doubtless, too premature to succeed, but the fact of its having been made clearly proves the tendency of the human mind At a later period, Condorcet, moving in the same direction, rose to a direct and final conception, proposing to himself the study of the successive developments of the human race · and although his work was an entire failure, it shows, no less, how deeply the want was felt From the same point of view, we may consider the efforts made in England during the last century to perfect history, by imparting to it the character of scientific explanation, instead of the descriptive or literary character which had

previously marked it In Germany, the works of Kant[1] and Herder on the Philosophy of History, and subsequently, the formation among Jurists of a school which regards legislation as always necessarily determined by the state of Civilisation, manifest with equal clearness, the general tendency of our age towards Positive doctrines in Politics Every day a taste for the works which display this character is increasingly manifested, dominating even the spirit of party The men who most earnestly endeavour to re-establish the empire of Theology, unconsciously yielding to the spirit of the age, make it a point of honour to employ chiefly Positive considerations[2] in establishing their views

The period has, then, at last arrived when the human mind, as the final result of all its previous labours, can complete the ensemble of Natural Philosophy by reducing Social phenomena, as all others have been reduced, to Positive theories The various preliminary efforts pointed out above indicate the necessity for this operation and render it immediately practicable, but they leave it still to be effected. Such is the great philosophic effort reserved for the Nineteenth Century by the natural progress of our intellectual development.

[1] Kant, in a small work written in 1784, of which even the title is remarkable (*Idea of a Universal History from a cosmopolitan standpoint*), showed that social phenomena, like all others, should be regarded as reducible to natural laws

[2] For example, the philosophical excellence, unquestionably great, of the work *The Pope*, is essentially owing to the circumstance that, by a grave inconsistency, the author sought, as far as possible, to employ only positive reasoning, and has made a very secondary use of considerations drawn from theological and metaphysical philosophy

Need for the construction of a System of Positive Philosophy

When this work shall have been completed, or, rather, sufficiently advanced to show that the human mind has irrevocably entered upon this new path, we can and should proceed to the construction of a General System of Human Knowledge, all the elements of which will then exist

Both before and since the Encyclopædia *of the* Eighteenth Century, a number of attempts were made in this direction: but none of them have succeeded Every day we see new ones arise which attain to no greater success, and serve no end but that of proving how strongly our intelligence needs to reduce its acquirements to order and unity. The worthlessness of all these efforts arises from the circumstance that the various branches of human knowledge being heterogeneous, it was necessarily impossible to combine them in a single system At former periods it was possible to construct a theological or metaphysical encyclopædia. Thus, for example, all the systems of the Greek philosophers were, in their age, so many encyclopædias When Social Physics has acquired some consistency, it will become possible to construct a Positive Encyclopædia But to attempt, as has hitherto been attempted, the formation of an encyclopædia at once theological, metaphysical, and positive, is to aim at constructing an ensemble out of elements which mutually exclude each other. It is not surprising that enterprises so ill-conceived should have ended in throwing discredit upon such a project for all men of good sense But such ought no longer to be the case when, Social Science having become Positive, and Theology with Metaphysics having been expelled from their last refuge, the system of our ideas will be exclusively composed of

homogeneous elements. Then it will be sufficient to sum up the various kinds of knowledge corresponding to the different classes of phenomena, in order to discover their natural connection, and thus to form a true Positive Philosophy, much more complete and more closely united in its parts than was ever possible for the Metaphysical and even the Theological Philosophy, which, being by their nature provisional, were never at any time strictly universal

This vast undertaking which, without doubt, the present century will see carried out, should be regarded as the last act and final aim of the great revolution begun by Bacon, Descartes, and Galileo It is indispensable, as being the only possible spiritual basis of the new social state towards which the human race so strongly tends in our day , for as an ensemble alone can any doctrines obtain the leadership of Society So long as Positive conceptions remain isolated, and do not offer themselves to the mind as various portions of a single and complete system, they may possess a great importance in special cases, they may even obtain great advantages in a struggle against the political authority of Theology and Metaphysics , but they can never replace these in the supreme direction of social order. No doubt the perfecting of our knowledge indispensably demands the establishment within the domain of Science of a permanent Division of Labour, and even that the specialisation of each kind of researches should be pushed as far as possible But it is equally incontestable that the social masses, who constantly need all these different results at once, and who neither can nor ought to be preoccupied with this internal mechanism, can only be brought to adopt scientific doctrines as their habitual guides by seeing them

presented as branches of one and the same tree. This condition is no less indispensable in reference to the scientific body itself, in order to impart unity and homogeneity to its political action, which will always be very weak unless concentrated. So long as this state of things shall subsist, Theology and Metaphysics, in spite of their manifest decrepitude, will still maintain, simply by virtue of their generality, a legitimate title to moral sovereignty.

Social Science the indispensable remedy for our mental and moral Anarchy

This last consideration brings me in another way to the necessity for Social Physics. In the reasoning hitherto employed, I intentionally put aside the point of view of Social Organisation, in order to fix the attention solely upon the philosophic movement which alone could determine this change. But the conclusion deduced from this single order of considerations is singularly fortified if we reflect, as we ought to do, on the great political wants of our existing society. I shall now confine myself to the general aspect of this important portion of the question, which I shall hereafter treat in detail.

Manifestly, Society, regarded from a Moral point of view, is in a condition of real and profound Anarchy, acknowledged by all observers, whatever may be their speculative opinions. This anarchy results, in the last resort, from the absence of any preponderating system, capable of uniting all minds in the same communion of ideas. Positive conceptions have acquired an extension sufficiently great to annul, in fact, the political influence of Theology and even Metaphysics, without having as yet become sufficiently general to replace these in the spiritual guidance of Society. As a result of this fundamental opposition, intellects, no longer united by any real bond,

differ on all essential points, with that license which unregulated individualism must produce Hence the entire absence of public morality, the universal spread of egotism, the preponderance of purely material considerations, and, as a last inevitable consequence, corruption erected into a system of government, as being the only kind of order applicable to a population quite deaf to all appeals made in the name of a general ideal, and alive only to the voice of private interest In order completely to terminate this disorder which, if it could last, must result in the entire dissolution of social relations, it is necessary to destroy its source, by bringing Society back, in some way or other, to mental Unity. Now, this can only be accomplished in one of two modes, either by restoring to Theological philosophy—for it is useless to speak of Metaphysics, which is merely transitional—all the influence it has lost, or by completing Positive Philosophy so as to make it capable of definitely replacing Theology To these simple terms we can now reduce the great social problem If, then, we consider that the impossibility of re-establishing Theology in the entire extent of its ancient dominion is demonstrated—and assuredly no one doubts this—no other solution is possible than the definitive formation of the Positive Philosophy Our business is not to inquire whether that is advantageous or regrettable; whether the operation is difficult or easy, whether it requires a long or a short time All such idle questions are put aside by one unanswerable observation. Society has no other issue, we must, then, forthwith put our hand to the work Besides, the other considerations here pointed out show that the last revolution needed to re-establish Society on a sure basis of Order, far from being beyond the existing

forces of the human mind, as is supposed, has been so completely prepared by its antecedents that it has now become inevitable.

Educational need for Social Science.

Thus the formation of Social Physics, which, viewed intellectually, has been proved indispensable for a complete philosophical system, is no less necessary from a social point of view, as the condition of a homogeneous social Education, itself the basis of a fixed and well-ordered hierarchy. These two essential conditions are, as is evident, complementary For education and philosophy stand in close and necessary relation ; since it is impossible to develop a society otherwise than under the influence of some preponderating system of ideas Social education was first theological, then metaphysical, because philosophy passed through those phases in succession In our day, it is at once theological, metaphysical, and positive, because philosophy offers these three aspects in reference to different classes of ideas , or, rather, neither real education nor true philosophy really exists now, because three systems prevail which naturally exclude each other. Lastly, in the new social era on which the human race is about to enter, philosophy, and consequently general education, ought to become entirely positive. These two great operations, the first of which should form the basis of the second, correspond to the same fundamental wants of our actual civilisation, considered under two different aspects, the need of a Doctrine and that of Guidance.

In my judgment this work has already commenced, for I consider Social Physics as having even now come into existence , and this point of view will always predominate in my philosophical labours. But I do not ask my readers to share immediately my conviction on this head

I merely desire to direct their attention to this natural and continuous progress of the human mind, ever more decidedly attracted towards Positive Philosophy. I hope to show them that the period has arrived when this revolution must unavoidably extend itself to social theories, and finally, to satisfy them that its accomplishment is the only real way of re-establishing moral order in society, without attempting to raise any useless discussion as to the precise degree of opportuneness or the exact mode of this change

The functions of Science

The considerations here presented naturally lead us to study the Sciences from a new point of view

In my opinion they are not simply the rational basis of the action of Man upon Nature. Their importance in this respect, although assuredly very great, is only indirect and secondary. It does not adequately account for the profound interest which the human mind, guided by an admirable instinct, has always taken in the most abstract scientific theories, without any idea of material advantage, an interest which still subsists in full force, despite the vicious preponderance accorded during the last three centuries to the purely practical point of view

I consider that the Sciences, even in their actual condition, are directly and mainly destined to satisfy this fundamental need of our intelligence—a system of positive conceptions as to the different classes of phenomena which can become the subject of our observations.

Viewed historically, the Sciences have emancipated the human mind from the tutelage of Theology and Metaphysics, which, though indispensable for its infancy, tended afterwards to prolong this indefinitely. Viewed in their present state, the Sciences ought, by their methods and

general results, to determine the reorganisation of social theories. Viewed with reference to the future, the Sciences, once systematised, must constitute the permanent spiritual basis of Social Order, so long as our race shall continue to exist

The Political History of Thought harmonises with the Law of the Three Intellectual States

This general survey presents the social existence of Men of Science from a point of view which departs from ordinary ideas It remains, then, to develop it, in order to obtain a complete grasp of the great moral revolution that now tends to realise itself in the human race

The Political history of Thought, regarded as a whole, presents three great epochs which correspond exactly to the triple condition—Theological, Metaphysical, and Positive—of human philosophy that forms the subject of our first paragraph I must confine myself here to a summary exposition of this new series of general facts.

The Theocratic System

The first social system under which the human mind was enabled to achieve real and lasting progress, was fundamentally characterised by the confusion of the Temporal with the Spiritual Power, or, more precisely, by the complete subordination of the one to the other To speak with still greater precision, it essentially consisted in the general and absolute preponderance of a Learned Caste, organised under the influence of Theological Philosophy.

Every primitive society, so far as its development is indigenous and spontaneous, manifests a natural tendency towards such an organisation But this social system could not establish itself completely, and acquire a great consistency, in any countries but those where, by a favourable conjunction of climate and position,—which this is not

the place to explain,—the Theological Philosophy was enabled soon to attain its complete development, and in consequence to gain an irresistible ascendancy over the other parts of the social system These conditions were fulfilled in Egypt, in Chaldea, in Hindustan, in Tibet, in China, and in Japan, to which we may add Peru and probably Mexico, some generations before the discovery of America [1]

Considering this state of Society merely from an abstract point of view, one is especially struck by the profound character of unity and interdependence, which then so entirely predominated in the intellectual system Never, since this period, did intellectual Unity manifest itself to the same extent, and it can never again be realised except by the direct construction of the Positive Philosophy.

The primary cause of this absolute systematisation doubtless lay in the homogeneity of human conceptions, then uniformly theological But this cause, though operating universally, did not everywhere produce the same effect, at least, not in so eminent a degree An organisation of the scientific body peculiar to this social state was also requisite

By the mere existence of a Learned Caste it may be said that a regular and permanent division had been established between Theory and Practice. But in the first place, this division was incomplete in one very important respect, since it did not extend to Social combinations, in the second place, there existed no precise Division of Labour within the theoretical domain Such was

[1] [Some of these, notably China and Japan, were not, strictly speaking, theocratic, [for they did not possess the true characteristics of a Theocracy.]

the special nature of this primitive Scientific Organisation

That universality of knowledge which is now so justly regarded as an ambitious chimera, then, on the contrary, constituted the dominant character of the members of the spiritual corporation. In the upper ranks of the hierarchy, each minister of worship was at once astronomer (or, rather, astrologer), physicist, doctor, even engineer, and also legislator and statesman. In a word, the names of Priest, Philosopher, and Man of Science, which have since acquired such different significations, were then exact synonyms The combination of these three characters is well marked in the person of Moses, whom we may consider as the best type of this primitive condition of the human intellect.

It is easy to explain this pretension to universal knowledge, since it directly depends upon the same causes which produced the preponderance of the Learned Caste, and it is at least as inevitable Granted that a given combination of physical causes has permitted human conceptions to attain, in certain countries, a development sufficiently rapid to allow of their being quickly systematised under theological inspiration, it manifestly resulted from this very rapidity that at the period of co-ordination, the different branches of knowledge were not sufficiently extensive to demand, or to admit of, a real and stable division

But this universality of work is not only coincident and necessarily connected with the social supremacy of the Learned Caste, it also forms its strongest support The credit obtained by the Priests as astronomers, physicians, and engineers was the basis of their political authority; and vice versa the power they enjoyed was an indis-

pensable condition for the development of their scientific speculations

We must seek in the nature itself of this Spiritual Organisation the true and fundamental explanation of the admirable vigour and consistency always so characteristic of this primitive social system, as compared with all societies that have since existed In a society whose elements are so closely connected that no portion can be impaired without disturbing the unity of the whole, ought we to be astonished at the energy of resistance which has hitherto triumphed over all known forces ? Accordingly, this social state should be considered as the triumphant epoch of the Theological System However real may have been its subsequent influence, we may say without exaggeration that after this period it continually declined To this point, therefore, must the human race retrace its steps, if retrogradation were possible

While recognising that the Theocratic System was at once the necessary consequence and the indispensable condition of the earliest advances of the human intellect, we cannot disguise from ourselves the fact that this system, by its nature, tended to become a permanent and almost invincible obstacle to more extended progress. Whether there be a necessary incompatibility between such an extreme solidity of the social system and its perfectibility , or whether, rather, the combination of these two qualities was merely a task which exceeded the means then accessible to man , it is certain that the most strongly organised nations became at last almost stationary This happened in all countries where the Theocracy was able to establish itself completely The explanation is easy

Without Division of Labour, the improvement of the human intellect is not possible Intellectually,

the Theocratic System had no value, except as furnishing the means of organising, on a regular and stable base, the germ of the separation between Theory and Practice. But this primary division which, once fixed, became by the very nature of the system, unalterable, required to be pushed much farther in order to allow of an indefinite development of the human faculties. Such was the radical vice of this primitive system.

The different classes of our conceptions cannot develop themselves with equal rapidity. I have already pointed out the necessary succession which their development invariably manifests. From this we may perceive that the scientific organisation in question, by virtue of which all the various theories are cultivated at once by the same intellects, cannot long exist without becoming strongly opposed to the improvement of our knowledge, since it admits only of such advances as can be simultaneously made in all parts of the intellectual system.

Confusion of the Spiritual and Temporal Powers in this System.

This view is much strengthened, when we combine with the purely philosophical point of view, the political standpoint characteristic of this first social epoch, the fusion of the Temporal with the Spiritual Power. For this condition, by itself, renders impossible every great improvement of human theories, as tending to the total and immediate overthrow of the political order. How could any important progress be expected under a system which converted every great discovery, not only into an act of impiety, but into a revolt? The Theological Philosophy was in those primitive times, and has even since continued to be, the only sort fitted to guide society. Accordingly, so long as the Temporal power was merely a derivative from the Spiritual

power; nay, further, so long as physical theories and social doctrines were not entirely separated, the former could not advance beyond the theological state without destroying the basis of society.

If, then, the progress of the human intellect was, at first, only rendered possible by means of the elementary stage in the Division of Labour initiated by the Theocratic System, it is evident that its subsequent advance demanded, no less imperatively, a much greater subdivision, but one that could only be effected under a totally different system. Above all, it was essential that the culture of the human mind should become independent of the immediate guidance of society, in order that the division and improvement of our knowledge might take place without compromising the existence of the political order.

The natural development of the various theories would doubtless, in the end, have spontaneously determined this separation, even in the Theocracies, although from the causes above indicated such a change would in them have been much retarded. In fact, it would seem inevitable that, however slow might be the progress, at the end of a certain time the ever-increasing difficulty of embracing the totality of human ideas must lead to a continual increase in specialisation. We may even observe in the learned castes of the different Theocracies some beginnings of a further division. But the course of events did not allow any Theocracy to enjoy an existence sufficiently prolonged to allow of our observing the development of such a revolution. Happily for human civilisation, the New Scientific Organisation established itself in a much more rapid manner.

Greek Philosophy and Science

It was in Greece that this change, so indispensable for the future destiny of the human intellect, was effected

Owing to the way in which the branches of knowledge were introduced from Egypt and the East into that country, intellectual activity from the outset was wholly external to the social order. The military activity towards which the Greek societies necessarily inclined rendered the permanent establishment of a pure Theocracy impossible in them. At the same time, other causes presented obstacles to the free and full development of this sort of activity, too powerful to allow of its exclusively absorbing, as at Rome, all the intellectual forces. By this happy combination of conditions the division between Theory and Practice presently became much more complete than it was in the Theocracies, and Theory could freely subdivide itself. A class of men were formed, purified from all political ambition and freed from all material preoccupation, devoted to a wholly philosophical existence. Starting from the primitive mental acquisitions of every sort accumulated by the sacerdotal castes, their only and constant aim was to cultivate, as completely as possible, the domain of human intelligence. This memorable revolution in the organisation of the scientific body is summed up in the marked distinction which was thenceforth established between the terms Philosopher and Priest. From an abstract standpoint, this new condition of things corresponds to the metaphysical character which then clearly began to manifest itself in the intellectual system.

At the beginning of this Second Organisation, the only real progress effected consisted in the character imparted to the Spiritual Corporation, which thus became purely speculative and completely disengaged from all participation in the conduct of public affairs. Moreover, the first Greek thinkers no more specialised their theoretical researches than did the sacerdotal

castes , except that, from the beginning, they assigned to the Fine Arts, which were more developed than other branches, a completely separate domain But despite this confusion, then inevitable, the capital condition was fulfilled, and the divisions of human knowledge were gradually established as their development increased

At first the Philosophers hoped to be able to perfect Moral and Social conceptions *pari passu* with the theories which concerned Physical phenomena The result of their labours at last made evident the necessity for a complete separation of these two classes of researches The earliest attempts to perfect Social Theories, where we can already observe a certain vague tendency to divest them of the theological character, showed that such a transformation was still far beyond the forces of the human mind Those philosophic schools whose speculations had principally taken this direction recognised that for this reason, and, above all, with reference to the conditions of social organisation, it was impossible to go beyond the highest generalisation of the theological doctrine, long since reached by the superior class of the sacerdotal hierarchies. Thenceforward, researches relating to the external world and the physical nature of man, as being naturally susceptible of a more rapid improvement, and, at the same time, less immediately bound up with political order, were entirely separated from social doctrines The latter continued theological, while the former became metaphysical and in consequence approached more nearly to the positive condition

Separation between Science and Philosophy

Thus, by degrees, a Spiritual Organisation was established entirely different from that of the sacerdotal castes The names of Man of Science

and of Philosopher which at first, when detaching themselves from that of Priest, were regarded as equivalent, became in their turn entirely distinct. Thenceforward, the former was applied only to thinkers devoted to the cultivation of the Physical sciences, whose existence, isolated, even in theory, from the movement of society, was still more purely speculative than that of the earliest Greek thinkers.[1] The latter only denoted those who, exclusively occupied with Moral and Social studies, sought more and more to take part in the spiritual government. In a word, from that period, the distinction became essentially the same as now. The two classes were so completely separated that in the latest periods of the Greek philosophy, they soon became rivals. About the age of Alexander[2] the separation began to show itself clearly. Its essential character was exhibited in two great series of works, those of Aristotle in the scientific direction, those of Plato in the direction properly called philosophic. The formation of the Museum of Alexandria, so different from the ancient Greek schools, is an unanswerable testimony to the existence of this separation, which it powerfully contributed to develop.

To this division we owe the ultimate progress of the human mind. The Sciences, entirely isolated, were thenceforward able to expand,

[1] At this period we see, in Archimedes, the perfect type of the scientific class properly so called. Assuredly the purely speculative activity of this class is well characterised by the historic picture of the sublime death of this great man; but, still more, by the admirable frankness shown in the apology he addressed to posterity for having sacrificed, even for a moment, his genius to discoveries of practical utility.

[2] [i.e., in the fourth century B.C.]

subdivide, and perfect themselves, and gradually to become positive, abandoning the metaphysical character which they possessed at the beginning of this period, without disturbing the social economy. Philosophy, concentrating its forces on a single point, was enabled to prevail on the majority of civilised nations to abandon Polytheism for Theism, and thus to develop in all its energy the civilising power of theological doctrines

This Spiritual Organisation, born in Greece, was the first foundation of the social system established twelve centuries afterwards, which was essentially characterised by that admirable division between the Spiritual and the Temporal Power, by which it acquired such a superiority over the Theocratic System The germ of this system doubtless existed in the purely speculative activity of the philosophic sects within the Greek populations. In order to allow of its development, it was necessary that the separation of the Sciences and Philosophy should permit the latter to tend freely towards the union of the different schools under a Theism common to all This end attained, one essential temporal condition was alone needed to begin the direct foundation of a new social organisation It consisted in the decline of the system of conquest produced by the union of the whole civilised world under a single dominion, which resulted from the preponderance of Rome So soon as these two fundamental bases had been laid, the course of events might hasten or retard the development of the social system of the Middle Age, but in the end, of necessity, it could not but establish itself

If the first commencement of this system is referable to the mental organisation of Greece, we may also discover therein the primary cause of

its decline during the last four centuries Owing to the absolute separation established between the Sciences and Philosophy, the Theological System could only harmonise with the special branches of knowledge so long as these retained the character they had when this system acquired its definitive state It could not by any possibility adapt itself to their further progress When they began to be positive, the intellectual incompatibility between Theology and Science rapidly acquired a political character, and manifested itself, more and more openly, as a fundamental antagonism between the Spiritual Power and the Scientific Class, which had originally constituted itself externally to the social system [1] Such is the great original schism which, somewhat later, became the general source of the disorganisation of this system

Plato shut his school against those who were ignorant of Geometry, the only science which then possessed a definite character During nearly a century his disciples had a large share in the improvement of this branch of our knowledge But the impossibility was soon very clearly manifested of reconciling this kind of research with the philosophic labour which that sect justly regarded

[1] Some distinguished thinkers who feel the true cause of the decline of the Theological System, desire in our day, to attempt its restoration by fusing it with the Sciences But this involves an oversight of the fundamental remark just made Even if the radical disparity between Theology and Physics did not make their combination altogether impossible, its accomplishment would require us to follow successively, in an inverse sense, all the modifications which since Plato have taken place in the spiritual organisation of society Without doubt, existing Europe cannot become once more Egyptian

as its most important work, and special office, by virtue of its original constitution Gradually, and for ever, the Platonists became entire strangers to the scientific movement Archimedes, Apollonius, Hipparchus, the three great mathematicians of ancient times, were certainly not Platonists

During a long period, the fundamental opposition between the Sciences and Philosophy was not sufficiently marked to allow of their antagonism compromising the Theological System So soon as this made itself felt, it became a danger to Science before proving itself such to Theology St Augustine, it is true, endeavoured to refute the reasoning of the astronomers of Alexandria as to the sphericity of the earth, and such an attempt by so great a mind clearly shows how far the severance of Philosophy and Science had gone But it is easy to perceive that this discussion is purely philosophical, and that he, as a member of the spiritual power, by no means attaches to it the immense importance which afterwards sprang out of the discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo

Catholicism and Science in the Middle Age

The reorganisation of the social state under the auspices of Theism was so important an operation that it almost exclusively attracted the aggregate of intellectual forces, and before everything else commanded the attention and respect of society Thus, during its long continuance, the Sciences were, comparatively speaking, much neglected, at least in the West [1] Moreover, the

[1] This abandonment of the Sciences is generally regarded as a consequence of the inroads of the barbarians, but it was manifestly long anterior to these It showed itself from the earliest period of Christianity, by the decay into which the Museum

very slowness of their progress easily allowed the members of the Spiritual Power to keep pace with the Sciences, without in any way injuring their theological office

But as soon as the new social system had been definitively developed by the labours of the great Pope Hildebrand[1] and his first successors, the germs of dissolution which this system contained from its birth, soon began to make themselves apparent The principal forces of the human mind and the public attention, concentrating themselves once more, little by little, upon the Sciences, produced great and rapid advances in this direction From that time the Spiritual Power rapidly declined, especially when the positive nature of the new mental acquisitions began to show itself

In vain did the Clergy manifest a commendable eagerness to take possession of this new domain Individual, or even collective, aspirations, however powerful, could prevail neither against the inflexible nature of things, which created an absolute incompatibility between Theology and Science, nor against that severance from the Sciences which was so deeply impressed upon the Theological Philosophy of the Middle Age from its birth, and continually developed itself In the end it was generally felt that the culture of the positive branches of knowledge could not properly belong to any but minds entirely devoted to these,

of Alexandria fell Some clear marks of this tendency may even be seen from the date when Platonism began to overshadow the other philosophic sects The alienation and even mutual antagonism of Men of Science and Philosophers, properly so called, developed themselves more and more from that time

[1] [Pope Gregory VII, died 1085]

and free from all obligation to maintain heterogeneous doctrines [1]

The great efforts of the clergy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, to take possession of positive theories at their birth, were singularly favourable to their progress, since this corporation was then the only one whose members could give themselves up uninterruptedly to speculative activity But they did not, nor could they, change the sacerdotal character If some ecclesiastics devoted themselves entirely to this new class of labours, they ceased to be Priests in order to become Men of Science, and in no degree lessened the antagonism naturally subsisting between these two mental systems We now think of Albertus Magnus and Roger Bacon as men of science, never remembering that one was an archbishop and the other a friar

The incompatibility of the natural theories with Theological Philosophy was not long in clearly manifesting itself at an early period after the epoch of these two illustrious men, by the indifference which the clergy, generally speaking, manifested towards this new study, and even by the kind of instinctive aversion with which it soon inspired them An evident proof of these dispositions may be found in the necessity, soon and increasingly felt by monarchs, of instituting a special system of teaching for the Sciences, placed under their immediate protection and made entirely independent of ecclesiastical authority From this period dates the first extension of Metaphysics to moral and social ideas, as well

[1] At a later period, the new series of efforts by which the Jesuits attempted, with so much perseverance and skill, to gain possession of the sciences, but which succeeded no better than the earlier attempts, rendered still more evident the radical impracticability of this undertaking

as the earliest direct efforts in opposition to the doctrines of the clergy Through the influence of these various circumstances, the separation and opposition of Science and Theology were thenceforward and everywhere, fully and irrevocably established The more decided struggles which occurred later only developed this antagonism more and more

Modern Science

The present is not the place for entering into the details of this view It is enough to have proved that from the period when the Theological Philosophy of the Middle Age had completed the corresponding social organisation, its action became entirely defensive, that a new spiritual order sprang up from the growth of natural theories, the culture of which more and more attracted the main forces of the intellect, that positive branches of knowledge increasingly became a part of general education, in a word, that Men of Science, kept outside of the spiritual power, gradually acquired all the influence which the Clergy had by degrees lost

A new scientific class needed—Social Physicists

What remains to be done by Men of Science in order to raise them, in their turn, into a New Spiritual Power, no less powerful in its way than the old power? It is necessary to complete the system of positive knowledge by creating Social Physics, and so, at last, to construct a Positive Philosophy In this way only can the Sciences, investing themselves with complete generality, replace Theology, which has become powerless for the moral government of society

This conception of the future of the Sciences leads us to consider the Third Organisation of the scientific body which corresponds to the Positive state of philosophy, as did the Greek organisation to its Metaphysical, and the Egyptian or Asiatic

to its Theological state. Men of Science, having at last constructed their appropriate philosophy, will incorporate themselves anew with Society, in order to assume once more its spiritual guidance, but in a way completely different from the Theocratic method. It remains for me to indicate the internal elaboration which for this purpose must be effected within the scientific class. The limits of this essay only permit me to present this conception very briefly. I shall afterwards treat each of its essential portions in more detail.

The positive mental system, more than others, demands and stimulates the Division of Labour. From its birth, the study of natural theories constantly and increasingly subdivided itself. From the simple fact of its indefinite expansion, it will necessarily undergo an increasing subdivision. Therefore there can be no idea of impressing on scientific men that character of generality which they still want, by a universality of efforts analogous to that of the sacerdotal castes. The design, even if attempted, would be impracticable, having regard to the actual extent of each kind of knowledge. On the contrary, the indispensable improvement can only be effected by a more perfect application of the principle of Division of Labour. What is needed is simply to relegate social investigations and philosophy, rendered positive, to a new branch of the scientific body. This class will be distinct from all other classes of scientific men, but only in the same sense that these are distinguished from each other. This new class will be compelled by the nature of its doctrines to maintain direct and uninterrupted relations with the others, as these, reciprocally, will be in regard to it through a general education preliminary to their special education.

Observation of the internal formation of the

scientific body proves that in reference to organisation, as well as to doctrine, *we need only* complete a revolution which has developed itself with ever-augmenting force This is easily conceivable if we consider the Encyclopædical order above established. In truth, the different classes of scientific men, although all special, are not so to the same extent Geometers are naturally the most special, because their science rests on no other, being, on the contrary, the basis of the whole of Natural Philosophy Passing to Astronomers, we already find greater generality in this class, because, in addition to their direct study of the phenomena concerned, they are necessarily accustomed to the perpetual use of the mathematical sciences Physicists properly so called, are still less special, because the nature of their studies requires a permanent resort to mathematical methods, and a direct knowledge of the general laws of the system of the world For a similar reason, Chemists who fulfil the conditions imposed by the nature of the phenomena which they study, necessarily possess a still greater degree of generality Lastly, Physiologists, engaged in studying phenomena the laws of which are bound up with those of all the rest, are naturally the least special of all men of science, being compelled to possess at least a general knowledge of mathematical, astronomical, physical, and chemical science Social Physicists will simply elevate themselves, in the same direction, one degree above the Physiologists Studying a class of phenomena which by their nature depend on the laws of all the preceding, they indispensably require a preliminary education familiarising them with the methods and main results of all the other positive sciences, as furnishing the only rational basis of their own labours. Thus having

continually under their eyes the ensemble of physical knowledge, they will inevitably be led to the direct construction of Positive Philosophy, as soon as their special science has advanced sufficiently far not to absorb all their activity [1]

Engineers

Simultaneously with the formation of this new class of scientific men, an important subdivision should also be effected in the scientific body, indispensable to the exactness of its philosophic character and, consequently, to the efficiency of its political action It consists in a new and final improvement in the general division between Theory and Practice. This division is still incomplete, inasmuch as the office of Engineer has always been more or less mixed up with that of the scientific thinker, on which, even in our day, it exerts a very powerful influence. In the early history of natural theories this confusion was doubtless inevitable, as it was also indispensable, in order to make their value appreciated by minds too gross to understand the utility of theories which do not allow of immediate applications. But now, this direct

[1] Moreover, to complete the solution of this problem of universality about which so much has been said, it is necessary, as it seems to me, to make a distinction between active and passive universality The former implies the wish to perfect all the branches of human knowledge simultaneously; and this is evidently absurd and chimerical The latter consists in cultivating a single science by the help of a knowledge of all the rest, sufficiently extensive and accurate to allow of comprehending their spirit and appreciating their relations with that which is specially cultivated. This is not only practicable, but indispensable. What I have just said shows that it is realised, more or less, in the different classes of scientific men. It ought to develop itself completely in the investigators of Social Physics.

and permanent relation is no longer needed. Henceforward the sciences should be judged above all by their philosophic value. Accordingly, men of science, far from being bound to place limits on their sentiments of theoretic dignity, should firmly resist every attempt, inspired by the exaggerated practical tendencies of our age, to reduce them to mere Engineers But an appropriate system of doctrines constitutes the best way of definitively extinguishing pretensions which will necessarily continue and be, to a certain extent, legitimate, until the relations between Theory and Practice have been organised by the aid of conceptions specially adapted to this end Scientific men can alone construct this system, since it must flow from their positive knowledge of the relations that subsist between the external world and man This great operation is indispensable in order to constitute the class of Engineers into a distinct corporation, serving as a permanent and regular intermediary between Men of Science and Industrialists in reference to all special works [1]

[1] It is easy to recognise in the scientific body as it now exists, a certain number of *engineers* distinct from men of science properly so called This important class of necessity arose late, when Theory and Practice, which set out from such distant points, had approached sufficiently to give each other the hand It is this that makes its distinctive character still so undefined As to characteristic doctrines fitted to constitute the special existence of the class of Engineers, their true nature cannot be easily indicated because their rudiments only exist I know but one conception capable of giving a precise idea of them, that of the illustrious Monge, in his *Géométrie Descriptive*, where he gives a general theory of the arts of construction The doctrines appropriate to Engineers should consist of a series of analogous conceptions, relating to all

Such, then, speaking generally, are the different doctrines essential for completing the modern organisation of the scientific body, and previously shown to be indispensable for completing the intellectual system adapted to the new condition of the human mind Doubtless these works will not be executed by living men of science, whose faculties are irrevocably engaged in important researches, the interruption of which would be absurd and injurious They could, however, be usefully undertaken only by minds educated under the influence of the various positive methods, familiar with the chief results of all the physical sciences, and subject to the direct and continued sanction of the existing scientific body. On the formation, more or less rapid, of this new class of men of science must depend the development of these complementary labours, destined at last to invest the Positive System with that spiritual supremacy assigned to it by the invariable law of progress of the human race

Modern Science and Education

As soon as these various works shall have attained sufficient maturity to acquire an unmistakable character, we shall see the Education of Society fall spontaneously, and for ever, into the hands of the

the other great operations of practice, rationally analysed. Their formation assumes that the construction of Positive Philosophy has already reached a certain point, for all important applications to the arts usually demand a combination of various kinds of scientific knowledge

The establishment of the class of Engineers, in its proper character, is the more important because this class will, without doubt, constitute the direct and necessary instrument of the coalition between Men of Science and Industrialists, by which alone the new social system can commence.

Scientific Class. Already every preparation is made for this great revolution. The Natural Sciences have at last in the eyes of all men, and must more and more, become the principal object of instruction. Where the regular system of public education does not sufficiently supply this pressing need of existing minds, they seek its independent satisfaction and succeed in finding it. Governments assisting, as they have done from the commencement, this special movement, create a multitude of special establishments. From the highest branches of theoretical instruction to the simplest rudiments destined for the least cultivated intellects, they endeavour, by every means in their power, to impress a positive character on all minds.[1] In a word, the political

[1] It seems to me that sufficient attention has not been paid to the series of efforts made, especially during the last thirty years, by the various European governments to propagate scientific instruction in all classes of society by Special Institutions, independently of the regular universities. This movement was first characterised by the foundation of a school (the Polytechnic School) which offered the philosophical innovation of an establishment for theoretical instruction of a high degree of generality, yet, possessing a positive character absolutely free from all theological and metaphysical mixture. Since that period, this movement has maintained itself uninterruptedly and with an ever-increasing intensity. At this moment the working classes are immediately called to participate in it by institutions, among the most zealous promoters of which we may name M. Charles Dupin in France and Dr. Birkbeck in England, which have been powerfully seconded by the governments. Even in Russia similar institutions are contemplated. They already exist in Austria and Prussia, and within a few years all Europe will be covered by them. Their influence cannot fail to produce the foundation of institutions of the same kind, but of a

measures which can really hasten this regeneration are already essentially developed. Nothing is wanting except the great philosophical condition, without which all these partial efforts, however efficiently pursued, could produce no very important result—the formation, as above pointed out, of generalised positive conceptions

The views submitted in this article may be regarded as a first sketch of the problem of the Spiritual Power, treated merely from the philosophical point of view Having thus laid down the principles of our discussion, we can now directly and thoroughly examine this great question, the most momentous of our time This must form the subject of a new investigation

more elaborate order, for the higher ranks of industry, as may be actually seen in England

Perhaps it is by this direct method that social education can be entirely regenerated, when the necessary doctrines shall have been formed For a recast of the existing universities would probably be too difficult.

FIFTH ESSAY

(*March* 1826)

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE SPIRITUAL POWER

Confusion of the Spiritual and Temporal Powers in Antiquity

All the social systems of antiquity were characterised by the Confusion of the Spiritual and the Temporal Powers, whether one of these two Powers was entirely subordinated to the other or, as more frequently happened, they were joined in the same hands. Thus regarded, these systems ought to be divided into two great classes, according as one or the other of the two Powers predominated Among those nations where, from the nature of the climate and locality, Theological Philosophy could rapidly arise, while the development of military activity was repressed,—as in Egypt and almost the whole of the East,—the Temporal Power was only a derivative from, and appendix to, the Spiritual Power, which was the supreme and constant regulator of the entire social organisation in its minutest details On the contrary, in those countries where, from a concurrence of physical causes, human activity was at an early period turned to warlike pursuits, the Temporal Power soon dominated the Spiritual Power and systematically employed it as an instrument and auxiliary Under the last head fall, in a nearly equal degree, notwithstanding important differences, the social systems of Greece and Rome

This is not the place to explain why these two kinds of organisation were necessary in these countries and at the epochs of their formation, nor how they worked concurrently, each in its own way, towards the general amelioration of the human race They are now referred to merely in order to mark with precision the most important political difference which has characterised the entire history of the Theological and Military System, separating its constitution in Antiquity from its constitution in the Middle Age

Separation of the Spiritual and Temporal Powers initiated in the Middle Age

In this last period, not only did the Theological and Military System undergo an immense amelioration through the establishment of Catholicism and Feudalism, but the grand political result of that foundation, namely, the Separation of the Spiritual and Temporal Powers, must be considered as having in a high degree perfected the theory of the social organisation for the entire duration of the human race, under any conceivable system By this admirable Division, human societies were enabled to establish themselves on a much larger scale, since it rendered possible the union under one spiritual government, of populations so numerous and so varied as to require distinct and independent temporal governments In a word, it thus became possible to reconcile, to a degree theretofore impracticable, the opposite advantages of political centralisation and dispersion It has even become possible, without falling into any absurdity, to conceive that at some future day, distant indeed but inevitable, the entire human race, at all events the whole of the white race, shall be united in one universal community,—a supposition involving self-contradiction so long as the Spiritual and Temporal Powers

were confounded In the second place, within each separate society, the great political problem of reconciling the subordination to authority, essential for the maintenance of public order, with the possibility of reforming its course whenever this needs rectifying, was solved as far as possible by the separation legally established between moral government and material government. Submission, in clothing itself with the character of voluntary assent, ceased to be servile, while remonstrance was no longer hostile, at least within certain limits, since it rested on a moral power legitimately constituted Before this period, there was no alternative between abject submission and direct revolt Such is still the condition of societies—for example, those organised on the basis of Mohammedanism—where the two Powers were from their origin confounded by the law

To sum up: by the fundamental Division between the Spiritual Power and the Temporal Power, organised during the Middle Age, human society was enabled to become at once more extended and better ordered, a combination which all the legislators, and even the philosophers, of antiquity had proclaimed impossible

Decline of the Catholic-Feudal System

Although the Catholic and Feudal System effected, as far as the duration of its supremacy permitted, all the general advantages just pointed out as inherent in the separation of the two Powers, and in this way contributed more powerfully than all previous systems to the improvement of Humanity, it is no less necessary to recognise that its subsequent decline was at once absolutely unavoidable and rigorously indispensable

I have already demonstrated[1] that Theological

[1] See the *Philosophical considerations on the Sciences and Men of Science.*

Philosophy and the moral power based upon it, by their nature could only obtain a provisional supremacy, even in the most perfect condition attainable by them, that is to say, under Catholicism. I have established that, after having guided the preliminary education of the human race, they must in its maturity be necessarily replaced by a Positive Philosophy and a corresponding Spiritual Power It is much easier to prove the corresponding truth as regards the Temporal Power which, originally founded on military pre-eminence, must finally belong to industrial superiority, in that mode of life towards which modern society, more and more, tends Accordingly, great as was the value of the Catholic and Feudal System in relation to the period of its ascendancy, the development of the human race in its twofold direction, scientific and industrial, necessarily ended by destroying this system, all the more rapidly because it was exceptionally favourable to this development I have even proved that, under the Spiritual aspect, we may at the very commencement of this system discern the germ of its destruction, which developed itself immediately after the epoch of its greatest splendour. This remark, the extension of which to the Temporal order is easy (since the abolition of serfdom and the Enfranchisement of the Commons almost coincided with the complete establishment of Feudalism), furnishes a striking proof of the provisional nature of the social system of the Middle Age

It is not my intention to give here the history either of the formation of this social system, or that of its dissolution But in order to place in a clear light the moral condition of existing society,—the special subject of this essay,—I must offer a general view of the way in which the spiritual disorganisation of this system has

been effected, with the main results thus produced

The destruction of one social system and the establishment of another are operations too complicated in their nature, and requiring too much time, to allow of their ever being carried on contemporaneously In the first place, the institution of a new political order presupposes the previous overthrow of the preceding social state, both as a condition of reorganisation by putting aside the obstacles which hindered it, and as a means of proving its urgency by manifesting the evil effects of anarchy. But even under purely mental aspects, the human intellect, from the weakness of its resources, cannot clearly understand a new social system until the previous one has been almost entirely dissolved. It would be easy to verify this deplorable necessity by numerous examples.

Critical and Revolutionary doctrines

Naturally, therefore, and inevitably, whenever the human race is obliged to pass from one political system to another, there arises a period of anarchy, at least of moral anarchy, the duration and intensity of which are determined by the extent and importance of the change This anarchical character necessarily developed itself in the highest degree, during the period of the disorganisation of the Catholic and Feudal System, since the revolution then demanded was the greatest in the whole course of human history,—the direct transition from the Theological and Military to the Positive and Industrial state, compared with which all previous revolutions were simple modifications. Accordingly, it prevailed in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, during which this social disorganisation was effected.

During the entire course of this period, which

may be justly described as Revolutionary, all sorts of anti-social ideas were put forward and reduced to dogmas as agencies for the demolition of the Catholic and Feudal System, in order to rally against it all those anarchical passions of the human heart which, in ordinary times, would be repressed by the preponderance of an organised social system. For example, the dogma of unlimited Liberty of Conscience was first constructed to destroy the theological power; then that of the Sovereignty of the People to overthrow the temporal power, and lastly, that of Equality to dissolve the old social classification; not to mention those conceptions of less importance that compose the Critical Doctrine, each of which has tended to demolish a corresponding piece of the old political edifice.

Everything that develops itself spontaneously is necessarily legitimate during a certain period, since it thus satisfies some real social want. Accordingly, I am far from overlooking the utility of, or even the necessity for, the Critical Doctrine, during the last three centuries. I believe, moreover, that this doctrine will inevitably continue, despite all contrary appearances, until the direct establishment of a New Social System; and that during this period it will exert an indispensable influence, since then only can the Old System be regarded as having terminated its existence. But if in this sense, the action of the Critical Doctrine should be considered, to a certain extent, indispensable for the development of Civilisation, it no less constitutes, in a far more important way, the chief obstacle to the establishment of that new political order whose advent it prepared.

By an irresistible fatality, the various dogmas which compose the Critical Doctrine were only

enabled to acquire the degree of energy essential for the complete fulfilment of their natural destination, by assuming an absolute character; but this renders them necessarily hostile, not only to the system they attacked, but to any social system Accordingly, from the time that the demolition of the ancient political order was sufficiently effected, the influence of the critical principles produced in society a disposition, sometimes involuntary, at other times conscious, to avoid all real organisation The habit contracted during three centuries, of applying this doctrine to all social questions, naturally induced men to adopt it as the basis for reorganisation, when the catastrophes which resulted from the destruction of the Old System proved the necessity for a return to order. Then was exhibited the strange phenomenon, inexplicable to anyone who has not followed its historical development,—political and moral disorder elevated into a system and presented as the ideal of social perfection For each of the dogmas of the Critical Doctrine, when understood organically, amounts to this principle, that Society under its corresponding aspect ought not to be organised

It would be easy to demonstrate, as to each of the modern political doctrines, that this judgment is noways exaggerated But I do not now propose to undertake the direct and complete examination of the Critical Doctrine. I have only sketched it here in order to show clearly the point of view from which I regard this theory. For my present purpose, I must confine myself to the consideration of its most important principle, namely, its attitude towards the fundamental law of the Division between the Spiritual Power and the Temporal Power

The Modern Revolution characterised by a rejection of the Division between the Spiritual and Temporal Powers

Of all the Revolutionary Prejudices which have sprung up during the last three centuries, owing to the decline of the Old social system, the most ancient, the most deeply rooted, the most generally accepted, the one that lies at the root of all the rest, is the principle which proclaims that no Spiritual Power should exist in society or, what comes to the same thing, that this power should be entirely subordinated to the Temporal Power. Monarchs and nations who are more or less openly at variance upon every other portion of the Critical Doctrine are entirely agreed about this starting-point In the countries where Protestantism triumphed, this annihilation or absorption of the Spiritual Power was regularly and openly proclaimed But the same principle has been at bottom as really, though indirectly, established in those states which are still nominally Catholic, where we have seen the Temporal Power completely subjugating the spiritual hierarchy, and the clergy aiding this transformation, eager to relax the bonds of union with its central government in order to nationalise itself Finally, as an evident and recent proof of the power and universality of this opinion, it will be sufficient to mention that we have seen some justly esteemed philosophers who, while struggling against this prejudice, found only obstinate opponents in their own party.

After the general explanation above given, I am not afraid of being accused, in reference to this central idea as well as to other parts of the Critical Doctrine, of overlooking their utility and even their temporary necessity, as means of effecting the transition from the Old to the New Social System But considering that the demolition of the former system inevitably began with the

spiritual order, the same course should of necessity be followed in the establishment of the latter I am thus led to a direct examination of the Fundamental Principle of the Critical Doctrine, in order that to the best of my ability, men may be brought back to the true elementary notions of general Politics, forgotten for three centuries, so far as these are applicable to the present state of society. Such is the aim of this essay, in which I shall endeavour to prove the necessity for the institution of a Spiritual Power, distinct from, and independent of, the Temporal Power, and to determine the main characteristics of the new moral organisation, appropriate to modern societies

Political evils due to this rejection

I must first prepare reflecting minds for placing themselves at a point of view so foreign to existing habits For this purpose, I think it necessary to make a series of observations which, though not directly affecting the question, strike me as adapted to draw attention to it, by showing empirically that the universal tendency of modern Publicists and Legislators to adopt a political organisation without a Spiritual Power leaves a vast and deplorable void in social order.

The experience of the past may be used in two different ways to establish the necessity for the Division between the Spiritual Power and the Temporal Power, first, by comparing the condition of the human race under the dominion of Catholicism and Feudalism with its condition under the essentially temporal organisations of Greece and Rome, secondly, by showing the mischief produced since the beginning of the sixteenth century, by the suppression of the Spiritual Power, or what is politically equivalent, its usurpation by the Temporal Power. Although it might be possible to draw from the former class

of observations important instruction directly applicable to the present question, the great diversity of the epochs would render such a demonstration too complicated to allow of its producing that intimate conviction which I especially desire to produce. Besides, I have sufficiently indicated the basis of such a comparison at the beginning of this essay. Thus, in what follows, I shall address myself exclusively to the latter order of facts, the consideration of which, as being more direct and evident, ought to be more decisive. It, therefore, remains for me to consider briefly, in reference to Modern Society, the principal political evils which may with certainty be attributed to the Dissolution of the Spiritual Power. So important an investigation would naturally require extensive development. But the reader, once placed at the right point of view, can himself easily supply details which I cannot here introduce.

In order to confine this series of remarks to such facts only as are capable of producing a clear and irresistible conviction, I purposely put aside all consideration of the great revolutionary catastrophes, although these are ultimately traceable to the spiritual disorganisation of society. I do so because, notwithstanding their origin, their return may be reasonably regarded as impossible. I confine my investigation to the habitual state of civilised nations during the last three centuries, which still subsists.

The decline of the Spiritual Power the cause of International wars in Europe

Considering, first, the most general political relations, we see that so long as the Catholic system preserved its vigour, the relations between State and State were subordinated throughout Christian Europe to a regular and permanent Organisation, which was capable of

habitually maintaining among them a certain voluntary order, and of inciting them, when circumstances demanded it, to a collective activity, as in the vast and important operations of the Crusades In a word, there existed then what M de Maistre, with profound truth, calls the miracle of the European monarchy Doubtless, in consequence of the state of Civilisation at that period, this government was very imperfect But in this respect, as in reference to the nation, is not the most imperfect government after all very preferable to anarchy? What has happened as regards this matter since the absorption of the Papal Power? The various European Powers have returned to a state of barbarism in their mutual relations Kings have inscribed on their cannons the words—thenceforward quite accurate—*ultima ratio regum* What expedient has been devised for filling up the immense void which the annulling of the Spiritual Power left? Doubtless justice should be rendered to the efforts of diplomatists to produce and maintain, in the absence of a real bond, what has been called the Balance of Power in Europe: but we cannot forbear from smiling at the idea of constituting in this way a real International Government. It is manifest that this system of political equilibrium, considered in its whole duration, has caused more wars than it has hindered The shock caused by the French Revolution ground it to powder, and every State has remained in continual fear of a general encroachment by some great power. At this moment, is not all Europe in dread, though no doubt without cause, of seeing the entire system of international relations put into jeopardy by the death of one man?

To the foregoing it must be added, in accordance with a judicious remark of M de Maistre, that the

action of the Spiritual Power should be estimated, not only by the obvious benefits it produces, but especially by the mischiefs it prevents, though these are not so easily ascertained. A memorable example, pointed out by this philosopher, suffices to show clearly the importance of his remark.

In the formation of the colonial system which followed the discovery of America, two rival nations, each of whom might envy the other the most important colonial possessions of the globe, and who were at many points constantly in contact, never engaged in a single war on this ground, while all the other European powers obstinately and bitterly contended among themselves for some almost insignificant stations. How was this great result produced? By a single act of the Spiritual Power, even then shaken to its foundation. A simple bull[1] of Alexander VI, which from the outset equitably traced a general line of demarcation between the colonial possessions of Spain and those of Portugal, sufficed.

I repeat the assertion, all that has happened has necessarily happened, and I can feel no barren regret as to the past. But let me point out, with the great Leibnitz, the fact of the important void left in the European organisation by the inevitable dissolution of the Spiritual Power, and thence conclude that the establishment of a new Moral Government is imperiously demanded by the present state of civilised nations.

Hence also flow disorders in the Internal Organisation of each People

Looking next to the interior organisation of each people, the same necessity becomes still more apparent for a number of reasons, of which I shall only point out the most general.

The decline of the Theological

[1] [The Bull *Intra Cetera*, 1493.]

Philosophy and the corresponding Spiritual Power has left society without any moral discipline Hence a series of effects which I shall mark in the order of their natural connection

1 Mental Anarchy

1st A complete Mental Anarchy Since everyone endeavours to form by his unaided forces a system of general notions without fulfilling any of the indispensable conditions, it has become quite impossible to obtain in the mass of men, even between two minds, a real and durable agreement upon any social question, however simple If this anarchy had no other effects than its ridiculous side the mischief would be unimportant, and satire would suffice to reduce it within reasonable limits But the facility it affords for regarding the majority of the subjects that so eminently concern good order, as being open, with almost equal reason, to opposite conclusions, produces effects of the most serious nature

In order to estimate rightly the depth and universality of this Intellectual Anarchy, it is necessary to observe that it does not now prevail merely among the partisans of the Critical Philosophy, who have erected it into a fundamental dogma It is manifested still more decisively, though in a less degree, by the partisans of the retrograde doctrine, among whom, being in contradiction with their tendencies, it constitutes an involuntary result of the general and irresistible progress of the human mind In the first place, we may remark in that party a fundamental separation, which often degenerates into direct opposition, between the defenders of Catholicism and those of Feudalism Moreover, considering the former only, whose opinions are necessarily more homogeneous, we perceive that while agreeing upon a sufficient number of points to be fairly regarded as forming a single school, they

nevertheless disagree essentially on fundamental questions, so widely that the practical results would be wholly incoherent if the state of society permitted any extended application of their doctrines. This is proved by an attentive examination of the theories of this school, advanced by its leading thinkers, M. de Maistre, M de la Mennais, M de Bonald, and M d'Eikstein Their various opinions reveal at bottom a marked individuality on the most important points [1]

2 Absence of Public Morality

2ndly. The almost total absence of Public Morality. On one hand, the social destination of each person, being no longer determined by any maxims generally respected, and our practical institutions of necessity conforming themselves to this intellectual situation, the growth of individual ambition is really no longer under any restraint but that of the irregular and fortuitous action of external circumstances On the other hand, since social sentiment vainly seeks, whether in private judgment or public prejudice, exact and fixed notions as to what constitutes the general good in each case, it ends by gradually degenerating into a vague philanthropic intention, incapable of exerting any real influence upon the conduct of life Owing to this twofold influence in the chief relations of society, each person is gradually led to make himself a centre, and the notion of private interest alone remaining clear in the midst of all this moral chaos, mere egoism naturally becomes the only moving power possessed of sufficient energy to guide active life

[1] The most consistent philosopher of all who write in this way, M de la Mennais, has recently been led into a grave infraction of his fundamental principles, by formally invoking the liberty of worship.

This result, now so apparent in Public morality, extends itself, to a certain degree, even to Private morality. Happily, this depends on many conditions besides that of holding decided opinions. Natural instinct, which speaks much more clearly in the latter than in the former case; the ever-increasing power of the habits of order and labour, which so strongly tend to banish the idea of vice; the general amelioration of conditions produced by the continual development of Industry, which renders temptations less severe and less frequent; the general softening of manners, as the result of advancing Civilisation; all these causes must, without doubt, greatly counterbalance the immorality which the absence of fixed principles of conduct tends in our day to produce. Nevertheless, the want of organisation produces, even on this head, effects which are undeniable, though more difficult to disentangle. Let each person—consulting his daily experience, and putting aside extreme cases, where the evil is so palpable as to cause its immediate suppression—examine whether real life does not suffer from the fluctuating condition that affects the larger portion of our ideas of duty, whether as regards the various domestic relations, or the ordinary mutual ties between employers and employed, or the relations of producers and consumers, etc.

Besides, an indirect observation will to some extent dispense with immediate verification. I refer to the fact of the very general preponderance, in practice, at least, of moral theories which pretend to explain all human sentiments by connecting them exclusively with self-interest. While theoretically the moral instinct rejects such notions, they have become the standing source of explanation for the world in general, and maintain, even among philosophers, a credit which but too faith-

fully indicates the real state of society This observation is corroborated by the view which predominates among many, that penal legislation furnishes, in the last resort, the only efficacious mode of assuring the morality of the lower classes

3 Social Materialism

3rdly The social preponderance which, during the last three centuries, has been more and more assigned to the purely Material point of view, is another manifest result of the spiritual disorganisation of modern nations. The practical power having, from the sixteenth century downwards, annulled or subordinated to an ever-increasing extent the theoretical power, the same spirit has gradually penetrated all the elements of Society In every subject, people have gradually come to consider, almost exclusively, immediate utility, or, at least, to place it in the first rank Thus, for example, in the systematic estimate of the sciences, their philosophic value has been increasingly overlooked, and they have only been appreciated according to their practical results

This materialistic spirit is pre-eminently apparent in England where, from a multitude of special causes, this provisional social organisation has since the sixteenth century acquired a greater degree of consistency than on the Continent. It predominates still more completely in the United States, where spiritual disorganisation has been pushed much farther than in any other country.

When the progress of events introduced the epoch of Constitutions, the same characteristic strikingly revealed itself in this new sphere of action. Public attention was exclusively occupied with the material aspects of this great work It aimed at recasting all practical institutions, at regulating, even to the smallest detail, the forms

of deliberative assemblies, without giving a thought to the previous establishment of new social doctrines, without so much as attempting to determine precisely the spirit of the new political system. Even in our day when, thanks to acquired experience, Society is entering upon better paths, to the extent at least of definitely renouncing metaphysical constitutions, it may be feared that the influence of the same habits will long impede a true reorganisation.

Doubtless it is by re-establishing moral order that this vast operation must commence, since mental reorganisation is at once more urgent and better prepared than the regulation of social relations. Nevertheless, it is probable that the popular disposition—still too pronounced—to demand new institutions, in other words, to reconstruct the Temporal before the Spiritual Power, will at first present a powerful obstacle to *the adoption of this, the natural and the only* efficacious course

4 Bureaucracy Corruption

4thly. I must point out, as the last general consequence of the Dissolution of the Spiritual Power, the establishment of that modern autocracy without parallel in history, which for want of a more adequate expression, may be styled ministerialism or Administrative Despotism Its peculiar organic character is the centralisation of power, pushed further and further, beyond all reasonable bounds, and its usual mode of action is systematic corruption Both inevitably result from the moral disorganisation of society

A well-known natural law of political action distinctly establishes that the only way to avoid being governed by others is to govern oneself It applies to the masses as well as to individuals, to things as well as to persons In its most extended

sense it signifies that in proportion as moral government is weak, material government must be strong, in order to prevent the entire decomposition of the body politic How, for example, can we imagine in the case of a population so extensive as that of France, whose various elements are no longer sufficiently combined by any moral bond, that the nation would be hindered from breaking up into separate communities, these again subdividing themselves, if in the absence of a common spirit, the central Temporal Power did not maintain all the social elements in a state of immediate and continual dependence? Such a result would only represent the continuing influence of the same principle which, as above pointed out, broke up the old European System into independent nationalities Accordingly, centralisation has increased in proportion as moral disorganisation has become more complete and obvious The same cause which made this movement indispensable likewise tended to render it unavoidable, since the annulling of the Spiritual Power destroyed the one legal barrier to the encroachments of the Temporal Power.

Corruption, employed as the permanent means of government, follows still more clearly from the destruction of the Spiritual Power. It might be foreseen from the growth of this shameful system in the country where the degradation of moral authority was most strongly constituted on a legal basis But it is easy to obtain a direct proof of this proposition

In a population where the indispensable cooperation of individuals in public order can no longer be produced by voluntary and moral assent accorded to a common social doctrine, no other resource for maintaining harmony remains than the melancholy alternative between force and

corruption. The first of these methods is incompatible with the nature of modern Civilisation, since the temporal action of society, ceasing to be military, has become essentially industrial Wealth, which through the institution of property, was the original measure of force, as being its permanent result, has in modern society more and more become its main and habitual source. In this respect it might be accurately described as potential force. Hence the gradual substitution of corruption for force, as a means of maintaining order. The more the new state of society rejected the latter, the more did it favour the former, from the time that moral disorganisation began clearly to reveal itself

Governments can only act on individuals by employing on a greater scale those means of influence which are recognised as most efficacious in daily intercourse Thus, when personal interest is considered in private relations as the only energetic motive adequate to inspire habitual confidence, need we feel astonished that the central power is led to employ the same means of action ? This sad result should not be imputed to the rulers any more than to the governed, flowing, as it does, from their mutual faults To speak more accurately, it is the painful, though transient, consequence of the state of anarchy into which society has been necessarily plunged during the transition from the Theological and Military system to the Positive and Industrial system

If the picture just sketched of the general effects gradually produced from the sixteenth century by the moral disorganisation of Society is considered to accord with observation, and if the facts are admitted to result from the cause to which I attribute them, it is manifest that the establishment of a New Spiritual Power is even more im-

portant Nationally than from a European point of view

This Revolutionary Transition necessary

In order to prevent as far as possible any misapprehension of my conception, I now state my opinion that in the former as in the latter point of view, this state of anarchy, of which I, with all true observers, deplore the melancholy results, was not merely an unavoidable result of the decline of the Old social system, but an indispensable condition for establishing the New one Examining under this aspect the four general facts above stated, I could prove that though revolting monstrosities when regarded as permanent conditions (as the Critical Doctrine, understood in an organic sense, requires), they are by no means such when regarded in reference to a merely transitional state. I limit myself, as regards this new investigation, to the first fact, which is the basis of all the rest

The profound Intellectual Anarchy which now prevails is not merely justified by the necessary decline of the Old social system, but is inevitable, and even indispensable, until the doctrines destined to found the new organisation have been sufficiently elaborated On one hand, so long as this kind of moral interregnum lasts, it will be impossible to discipline minds On the other hand, if before this period arrived, a direct attempt were made to produce mental unity, which in the absence of suitable doctrines, could only be accomplished by material and arbitrary measures, it would of necessity follow that, the free development of thought being forbidden, both as regards the formation of new doctrines and their diffusion, the process of Reorganisation must be arrested.

Thus I appreciate as fully as anyone all that is truly valuable in the Critical Doctrine, but I desire that all misapprehension as to its real

character should henceforth cease The period has arrived when we can give a rational account of the course which has been followed, mere routine is no longer indispensable It is possible to maintain the just, though transitory, influence of Negative Doctrines without on that ground treating them as Organic, and in this way allowing ourselves to be lulled into a factitious security in reference to the serious dangers with which the vicious prolongation of the existing anarchy threatens Society. Such an intellectual attitude, though perhaps above the average capacity, should at least become the habitual point of view of all thinkers who wish to devote their forces to the grand social operation of the Nineteenth Century.

The need for a new Spiritual Power

By the ensemble of the views above submitted, I hope I have sufficiently prepared all reflecting readers for the direct treatment of this fundamental question of the Spiritual Power, which in our day excites so many puerile and chimerical fears, and accordingly, to this I now proceed

The existing state of opinion, in reference to the fundamental question of the necessity for a Spiritual Power, offers to the impartial observer a singular and even painful contrast. On one hand, those who take up the cause of true Liberty, of Civilisation, who, in a word, specially proclaim themselves progressive, and to a certain extent are so, dominated by the desire, legitimate but ill-reasoned, of avoiding at any price a Theocracy, follow a course which, were it practicable, must, to avoid anarchy, inevitably lead to the most degrading of despotisms, that of force destitute of all moral authority On the other hand, those who are accused of a retrograde tendency, and who in truth, to some extent deserve this reproach, in respect not of their philosophical aims, but of the inevit-

able consequences of their doctrines were these completely carried out, are at bottom the only persons whose theories adequately assert the dignity of human nature, since they make moral superiority the corrective and regulator of force or wealth

By the considerations above pointed out, I have endeavoured to prove that the social condition of the most civilised nations imperiously demands the formation of a New Spiritual Order, as the first and chief mode of ending the Revolutionary Period, which began in the sixteenth century and thirty years ago entered on its last stage It remains to examine directly the nature of the Spiritual Organisation appropriate to modern societies So fundamental a problem, and one intimately connected with all the highest political questions, could only be properly treated in a special work exclusively addressed to the most serious thinkers But although the very brief indications to which I must here confine myself are assuredly inadequate for the complete treatment which such a question merits, they will perhaps call the attention of thoughtful minds to this subject, and that is my object

Functions of the New Spiritual Power

In order to obtain a complete general view of the new moral order, it is necessary to consider separately the Functions which the Spiritual Power should fulfil, abstracted from its peculiar constitution, and the nature of the Organisation requisite for bringing it into harmony with Modern Civilisation. The following explanations are exclusively devoted to the former class of considerations, essentially reducible to an analysis of the main reasons that render a spiritual government necessary to Society. On a subsequent occasion I shall examine the second part of the question This division is de-

termined by the natural course of Public Opinion, which, doubtless, will attain to a clear perception of the need for a new moral power before it accurately comprehends its true organisation After having thus pointed out the ensemble of the New Spiritual Order towards which modern societies tend, I purpose, in a concluding essay,[1] to consider the general course by which this great work of reconstruction should naturally be effected, by taking its existing stage as our point of departure

It would be easy to form empirically a clear idea of the functions of the modern Spiritual Power, by a careful study of those which devolved upon the Catholic clergy at the period of their greatest vigour and complete independence, that is to say, from about the middle of the eleventh to nearly the end of the thirteenth century Doubtless, the philosophical bases of these two powers, with the corresponding social relations and, consequently, their respective modes of influence, differ entirely in their nature and are in many respects even absolutely opposed. But as regards the extent and the intensity of action, which is here the essential point, it may be asserted that for every social relation which fell within the province of the Catholic clergy, an analogous attribute will be found in the new political system as a function of the modern Spiritual Power Inasmuch as the new system will be founded more quietly than the old one, and at a more enlightened period, when its nature can be more easily foreseen and therefore better understood, it is even probable that the intervention of the Spiritual Power will be more explicit and complete, because it will encounter

[1] [This essay was never written, but the promise was fulfilled in Comte's second great work, the *Positive Polity* The Sixth Essay, which concludes the present volume, deals with another subject]

less resistance in the corresponding Temporal Power. Nevertheless, although this comparison is invaluable as offering a degree of precision not easily attainable in any other way, it can only profit minds able to put out of sight the extreme difference of the two states of civilisation, or, rather, to make a just allowance for it, and that have studied the past with a disposition sufficiently emancipated from the pernicious prejudices generally inspired by the Critical philosophy towards the spiritual system of the Middle Age. Such a comparison would, therefore, almost unavoidably lead most readers into erroneous applications, which would give a very mistaken idea of my view Accordingly, though I deem it advisable to signalise this point of similitude for the benefit of those who can utilise it, I shall merely undertake here the direct appreciation of the Functions of the modern Spiritual Power

Although it may be useful and in certain cases, even necessary, to consider the idea of *society*, abstracted from that of *government*, it is universally recognised that these ideas are in fact inseparable. In other words, the lasting existence of every real association necessarily supposes a constant influence, at times directive, at times repressive, exercised within certain limits by the whole on the parts, in order to make them converge towards the general order from which they always naturally tend to deviate more or less, and from which they would deviate indefinitely could they be entirely left to their own impulses. This influence embraces two kinds of Action, one Material, the other Moral, which though always co-existing, are entirely heterogeneous both as regards their bases and their modes of action. The first of these concerns actions, enforcing some, preventing others This kind of influence is founded

upon force, or, what comes to the same thing, upon wealth, which has become its equivalent among modern nations, in proportion as the progress of Civilisation has transferred to industrial pre-eminence the civil power originally attached to military superiority. The second consists in the regulation of opinions, desires, and will, in a word, of tendencies. Its basis is that moral authority which is naturally derived from intellectual superiority and knowledge. In this way, the two great inequalities on which all society is based concur to maintain social order.

From the time when Civilisation had advanced sufficiently to allow of our assigning these two general branches of government to different classes—as took place in the Middle Age—the distinction between them became apparent to everyone, and the terms 'Temporal Power' and 'Spiritual Power' were created to denote it. For that reason alone it is desirable to preserve these terms, at least provisionally, in the new social state, although their structure still recalls the social state that gave them birth.

Education the chief function of the Spiritual Power.

The proper destination of the Spiritual Power is, then, the Government of Opinion, that is to say, the establishment and maintenance of those principles which ought to preside over the various social relations. This general function is divisible into as many parts as there are distinct classes of relations. In truth, no social fact can escape the influence of the Spiritual Power when this is well organised, that is to say, in exact harmony with the corresponding state of Civilisation. Its chief attribute, therefore, is the supreme direction of *education*, whether general or special, of the former especially, the word being taken in its most extended and just sense, so as to embrace the

entire system of ideas and habits necessary for initiating individuals into the social order under which they must live, and for adapting, as far as possible, each of them to the special office he ought to fulfil In this great social function the action of the Spiritual Power is most clearly marked, as constituting its exclusive attribute ; while in all other cases, its influence is more or less mixed up with that of the Temporal Power. In this way, it decisively manifests its power, and at the same time lays the solid foundation of its general authority. *Education* would even include the national functions of the Spiritual Power, if by an abusive extension of this expression, we included under it, as some philosophers have done, not only the preparation of youth, but also that important action exerted on adults, which is its necessary complement and inevitable consequence This second class of functions appertaining to the Spiritual Power consists in putting forward unceasingly for the regulation of active life, both as regards individuals and the masses, the principles which they imbibed in youth, and enforcing their application when neglected or violated, so far as moral means are efficacious for that purpose [1]

[1] Besides the above two kinds of functions, the Spiritual Power also evidently exercises, as a competent body of thinkers, a consultative influence, direct or indirect, in all social operations But this latter office, which our present incomplete and erroneous system of education disposes us to exaggerate and overestimate, would in a well-ordered social state, fall within one or other of the two former For this reason I have not expressly mentioned it in my present summary exposition For when *education* is what it ought to be, individuals or the masses rarely require in practice any general principles but those under which they have been brought up. It is only necessary to

International functions of the Spiritual Power

Such, briefly considered, are the general functions of the Spiritual Power, viewed in reference to the Nation alone. But International relations assign to it a new class of functions, which however flow from the former, applied to a wider sphere Considered in the abstract, the jurisdiction of the Spiritual Power should acknowledge no other territorial limits than those of the habitable globe, if all portions of the human race had nearly reached the same state of Civilisation, since a spiritual association is by its nature evidently capable of an indefinite extension But it embraces, in fact, only the Nations (for example, those in Europe) whose social state is sufficiently similar to allow of their maintaining a certain degree of permanent community, and yet so different as to require temporal governments distinct from, and independent of, each other. For as soon as this similitude exists, continuous relations inevitably arise, whence result at once the possibility and the necessity for a certain common direction, destined to regulate them by the influence of general and uniform principles

We cannot wonder that Catholic philosophers should have made its European influence the main and characteristic attribute of the Spiritual Power, since, belonging to it exclusively, this constituted its most obvious and decisive office Without doubt at each social stage, the association of a

remind them of these and to explain their application, because they naturally tend to forget and misunderstand them When the general or special needs of society really require New Principles, the Spiritual Power, as the class on whom the cultivation of theoretical knowledge devolves, should supply the want and suitably introduce them into the educational system

certain number of men under a common Spiritual System always and necessarily precedes their union under the same Temporal Government That is equally true for National as for European order But this truth can be far more easily proved in the latter than in the former case, for in this the two Powers constantly co-exist, while in the other, from the nature of things, spiritual association always subsists in full force long before any beginning of temporal association So true is this that in the Old political system, the spiritual union alone subsisted, and it is still doubtful whether the temporal union will ever subsist under any system.

Such then, incontestably, is the second great object at which the Spiritual Power aims · the fusing of all Europeans and, generally speaking, of the greatest possible number of Nations, into one moral communion This last office, which completes its attributions, is like the preceding, reducible to the permanent foundation of a uniform system of education for the various populations, and of that regular influence which necessarily results therefrom Thus it is that the Spiritual Power naturally becomes invested, in reference to the several Nations and their Temporal chiefs, with the sort of authority indispensable for inducing them, willingly or unwillingly, to submit their differences to its arbitration, and to receive from it a common impulse whenever a collective action is needed

Respective functions of the Spiritual and Temporal Powers

Thus, to sum up · the life of individuals and that of Nations is alternately composed of Speculation and of Action, in other words, of tendencies and results These two kinds of facts are intertwined in a thousand ways in real life The proper and exclusive object of the Spiritual Power is to

regulate the former, that of the Temporal to regulate the latter. Each of the two Powers acts legitimately so long as it confines itself strictly to its natural sphere of action, so far at least as this distinction is humanly possible. When either, passing this limit, usurps a function of the other, an abuse occurs, and though such usurpations, in both senses, have undoubtedly been, or may even again become, momentarily inevitable and indispensable under certain circumstances, they do not, for that reason, constitute the normal state. Such is the typical order towards which political combinations should tend; although, unquestionably, it may be foreseen that the imperfection of the human organisation, whether as regards intelligence or feeling, in this, as in every other, case forbids the hope of ever reaching complete success.[1]

The Spiritual Power must regulate Industry

Having thus, in order to fix our ideas, laid down this general definition of the Spiritual Power for every social state, it becomes easy, by applying the preceding considerations, to show that this Power, once properly reorganised, should exert as great an influence in Modern Civilisation as in that of the Middle Age. I need not specially concern myself with the latter, as to which I refer

[1] Philosophically considered, Spiritual and Temporal influence will always remain, by their nature, perfectly distinct, but considered politically, it is not always possible to make a distinction, even approximately, because there are a multitude of secondary offices—which this is not the place to point out—where the two Powers must inevitably be united, pretty equally, in the same hands. The fundamental principle of the Division of the two Powers simply requires that no individual or body of men should possess both in a high degree, and this is not only possible but has long since become inevitable, especially in the modern system of society.

my readers to the works of the Catholic philosophers, and particularly to those of M de Maistre, who in his treatise on *The Pope*[1] has given the most systematic, profound, and exact exposition of the Old spiritual organisation.[2] We have here,

[1] [*Du Pape*, 1819]

[2] The philosophers of the retrograde school, and particularly M. de Maistre, who may now be regarded as its head, while defending the Catholic system, have offered some general considerations of great importance on the Spiritual Power, as an element of every conceivable society. But these abstract conceptions, though capable of supplying useful hints to persons who desire to consider this fundamental question from its true point of view, are deficient both in the precision and in the generality necessary to establish a methodical conviction In them we may remark the radical inconsequence which consists in directly transferring to modern societies, considerations exclusively drawn from the observation of mediæval societies, so essentially different Associated, moreover, as they invariably are, with projects for restoring a system whose destruction, already almost completed, is henceforward irrevocable, they tend in the present state of men's minds rather to fortify than to uproot the general prejudice against every Spiritual Power We may even remark that the involuntary, though incomplete, sentiment of total disaccord with their century inspires these philosophers with a hesitation and timidity which shows itself even in their judgments of the past

Philosophically regarded, then, these works essentially possess only an historical utility, as being eminently adapted to place in the clearest light, the true general character of the Old social system, and to secure a just appreciation of the immense benefits which the human race owes to it In this respect, the conceptions of the retrograde school preserve all their value, as being fully and directly applicable to an order of facts for, or rather from, which they have been systematised But in reference to the moral reorganisation of existing societies, the

essentially, to consider the Spiritual Power in the social state peculiar to modern nations, which I regard as being characterised, under its temporal aspects, by the entire preponderance of Industrial Activity

Principle of Division of Labour

In the positive order of society, Organisation, whether considered as a whole or in detail, is nothing but the regulation of the Division of Labour; this expression being understood not in the very narrow sense given to it by the economists,[1] but

question must be regarded as one absolutely untouched

It remains to point out that the political influence of the retrograde school is, nevertheless, in this point of view, very useful in our day, and even necessary, during a certain period, though only indirectly and, so to speak, negatively useful For it presents, on one hand, an indispensable impediment which preserves society from the total preponderance of critical doctrines that would hinder all real organisation At the same time it acts as a stimulant, no less essential, to compel modern civilisation to produce the moral system fitted to itself, and adapted to give it the consistency which it needs in order to become capable of replacing the old one In this sense, the influence of the retrograde school is quite as necessary as that of the negative school, though in a different way, and one must naturally subsist as long as the other.

[1] The Economists were led, by the imperfect nature of the investigations which the general progress of the human mind assigned to them, to consider the social state from a very imperfect point of view. It is, therefore, easy to understand that they could only embrace the narrowest and least important applications of the principle of the Division of Labour, of which they are, properly speaking, the exponents To the credit of Adam Smith, it should be remarked, that not only was he the first to conceive this great principle in a clear and positive manner, but he presented it in a much broader manner than any of his successors.

in its most extended sense, that is to say, as embracing all the various kinds of co-existing labours, theoretical or practical, which co-operate to the same end, including distinct national as well as individual functions The ever-increasing separation and specialisation of distinct organs of activity, as regards both individuals and nations, constitute in fact the general means of improving the human race, as by a necessary and continuous reaction, they are its permanent result [1] In this way, Society naturally tends to enlarge itself more and more, and must, sooner or later, comprehend the totality of mankind, if the duration which physical laws assign to the progressive activity of our race is sufficiently prolonged All real steps in advance which have taken place, or can take place, in Social Organisation may be regarded, from this point of view, as producing, or tending to produce, a better Division of Labour For social order would manifestly be perfect, whether as regards personal well-being or the harmony of the whole, if we could in all cases assign to every individual or nation that precise kind of activity for which they are respectively fitted by natural disposition, antecedents, or special circumstances. This, considered from another point of view, would simply constitute a complete Division of Labour. Doubtless such a social order could not at any period exist in perfection. But the human race continually tends to approach this limit more and more, although we can never determine how far we shall fall short of it In the social state

[1] The considerations submitted in this and the following paragraphs are, naturally, as applicable to theoretical as to practical order But I have thought it best to apply them to the latter, in order to place in a clearer light the necessity for the Spiritual Power, which is now my chief aim

which among modern nations establishes itself with increasing solidity, this tendency is most direct and apparent For industrial activity, compared with military activity, is characterised by this admirable property, that its free and full development in one individual or nation does not necessarily involve its repression in other individuals or nations On the contrary, it not merely permits but, within certain limits, promotes universal co-operation, whence it naturally follows that men and nations are continually impelled to form associations more and more extended and pacific.

Evils resulting from this Division

But if the Division of Labour, regarded in this light, be the general cause of human improvement [1] and of the development of the social state, it presents under another aspect, no less natural, a continual tendency to deterioration and dissolution which would in the end stop all progress, unless constantly checked by the ever-increasing action of government and, above all, of spiritual government It necessarily results from this constantly progressive specialisation, that each individual, and each nation, habitually places itself at a point of view more and more narrow, and is guided by

[1] The imperfection of language obliges me to employ these words—improvement and development—of which the former and even the latter, though more precise usually recalls ideas of absolute excellence and indefinite amelioration, foreign to my meaning These words are merely used by me with the scientific purpose of designating, in Social Physics, a certain succession of states which the human race reaches in accordance with fixed laws, analogous to their employment by physiologists in the study of the individual, to designate a series of transformations which involve no necessary idea of continuous amelioration or deterioration.

interests increasingly special. If then, on the one hand, the intellect is sharpened, on the other, it becomes narrower,[1] and so, too, what sociability gains in extent it loses in energy. In this way, each individual and nation is rendered more and more unfit to grasp, unaided, the relation between his special action and that of the whole social organism, which at the same time becomes increasingly complicated On the other hand, each feels more and more disposed to detach his particular cause from the common cause, every day less easily apprehended These disadvantages, incident to the Division of Labour, evidently tend, from the nature of things, to augment continually *pari passu* with its advantages. The former then would overbear the latter, if they could act unreservedly Hence the absolute necessity for a continuous action, produced by two forces, one moral, the other physical, specially destined to bring back to the general point of view minds predisposed to diverge, and to impose the common interest upon individualities which constantly tend to deviate from it While such an intervention is indispensable, it becomes possible, and even unavoidable, because the natural development of the various inequalities which necessarily result from the Division of Labour tends, of itself, to establish the hierarchy, Spiritual and Temporal, requisite for this general action Such, from an elementary point of view, is the Theory of Government, the entire essence of which thus consists, at all times, in regulating the hierarchy which forms itself

[1] Some economists, and among others M Say, have perceived this inevitable result of the division of labour when carried very far, but only in reference to those subordinate cases which had formed the exclusive subject of their observations

spontaneously in the interior of society, so as to diminish as much as possible, the evil, as compared with the beneficial, influence of the Division of Labour.

These considerations are specially applicable to the system of Modern Civilisation, as much so as those very different ones previously pointed out In our social state, where the Division of Labour is pushed farthest and must inevitably, more than in any previous state, continually augment both as regards individuals and nations, the disadvantages attaching to this division, no less than its advantages, are necessarily more pronounced. Under one aspect, it is as inferior to the social condition of the nations of antiquity, as it is superior under the other , and this furnishes ample matter for discussion to those who desire to praise or blame either absolutely, and they can do so according to the point of view at which they place themselves Who, in fact, has not remarked that, in mental grasp and political energy, the nations of antiquity were as superior to the moderns as they were inferior in extent of knowledge and universality of social relations ? From the foregoing remarks it is apparent that there is nothing accidental in this contrast, the source of which we should fathom in order to exclude vicious attempts to combine in the social order two mutually incompatible sorts of excellence.[1]

[1] In studying the special social characteristics of the ancient nations, we should only consider the classes that really constituted society, namely, the freemen, slaves being generally regarded as a kind of domestic animal. With this limitation which, besides, proves that the state of the human race as a whole has, since this period, undergone a great improvement, the remark made in the text cannot be disputed.

Remedy to be found in formation of a new Spiritual Power

Be this as it may, the last class of considerations indicated above, which explain the general function of Government, conceived in its largest scope and especially as part of modern civilisation, evidently apply in a special manner to the Spiritual Power, proving that in the new social state the action of this power should be more extensive, and less intense, than in all the preceding states of society. Since, in fact, the general disadvantages incident to Division of Labour inevitably increase by the same necessity which produces the gradual development of Civilisation, society needs more and more, particularly among the modern nations, to feel the influence of a speculative corporation which, specially and permanently devoting itself to the general point of view, is destined to recall this both to individuals and nations, and which, being at the same time, by its character and social independence, disinterested as regards the numerous causes that produce divergency and isolation, is eminently fitted to identify its particular interest with that common interest whose peculiar organ it may be considered in the majority of cases. But in order to complete this general view, it is indispensable to draw a more precise distinction, as regards the continuous development of the total influence of Government, between the Spiritual direction and the Temporal direction of Society

Relations between the Spiritual and Temporal Powers

Studying the mechanism of human societies thoroughly, we may perceive, as pointed out above, that in every political system the formation of the Spiritual Power invariably and necessarily preceded the development of the Temporal Power, even where these two powers were united in the same hands Thus, to take the most decisive example, the Roman constitution was originally

as essentially theocratic as the Etruscan, and although it subsequently assumed so different a character, the patricians always considered their authority as a sacerdotal corporation the essential basis of their power. In truth, generally speaking, the spiritual association, founded on community of doctrine and the resulting harmony of sentiments, must, by the nature of things, precede the temporal association founded on a conformity of interests The latter can never exist without the former, interests being never sufficiently homogeneous to dispense with a certain similitude of principles Yet it is possible to conceive an association existing by identity of principle alone, supposing the opposition of interests not to be excessive, although society cannot subsist in a complete and stable sense, either between individuals or nations, unless both conditions are, to a certain extent, simultaneously fulfilled. In proportion as Civilisation develops itself, each of the two kinds of association augments in extent, while diminishing in energy, as above explained. But the original difference flowing from their intimate nature always makes itself felt in one respect. The temporal association being incapable of supporting itself alone and without the co-operation of the Spiritual Power, while spiritual association can, to a certain extent, subsist by itself and without the help of the Temporal Power, the Spiritual Power enlarges its sphere amid the growing complication of Society, whereas the Temporal Power sees its sphere contract In fact, the Temporal Power only rules what cannot be governed spiritually, that is to say, Force only rules what Opinion cannot sufficiently control Now, in proportion as men become civilised, they become on one hand more easily affected by moral motives, on the other more disposed to a peaceful adjust-

ment of their interests. For this reason the action of the Temporal Power continually decreases and ought to diminish in the new state of society more than in the preceding states, while the action of the Spiritual Power augments and should become greater in the modern system of civilisation than in any other. Thus we see how profoundly vicious is that disposition with which the Critical Doctrine has imbued nearly all minds, and which disposes men to conceive the new social order as subsisting without any Spiritual Power On the contrary, this power should now necessarily exert a much greater political influence within its natural sphere of action than can be exerted by the Temporal Power, which tends to become less and less important, and to reduce itself more and more, so long, at least, as Civilisation continues to advance, to a purely civil hierarchy, although probably this last result is never absolutely attainable

Having thus conceived the general action of the modern Spiritual Power, by contemplating its various offices, whether National or European, as a whole, it is necessary to complete this view by considering them in their main details

National functions of the Spiritual Power

The first division of this group of functions, to which I must here confine myself, consists, as above remarked, in distinguishing in the Spiritual Power two grand classes of offices, the one National, the other European [1] Let us first consider the former.

[1] Obliged to employ one or other of two expressions, *European* or *universal*, in order to designate that part of the functions of the Spiritual Power which is exerted over International relations, I prefer the former as being the most precise and consecrated by past usage, although probably it is at once too large and too narrow. But I employ it without prejudice to the territorial extension which the Spiritual Power will some time or other attain.

We have seen that, in this respect, the action of the Spiritual Power essentially consists in creating through *education* the opinions and habits which ought to guide men in active life, and afterwards in maintaining by regular and constant moral influence, exercised both over individuals and classes, the practical observation of these fundamental rules.[1] We must, therefore, examine the chief grounds which, contrary to existing prejudices, necessitate in the new social state a Moral Government bearing on ideas, dispositions, and conduct, both as regards the individual and the collective order

Faith the basis of Action

Dogmatic belief is the normal condition of the human intellect, towards which it tends naturally, at all times and in every direction, even when seeming to deviate most from it For Scepticism only constitutes a crisis it is the inevitable result of the mental interregnum which necessarily arises whenever the human mind is obliged to change its doctrines, and at the same time, the indispensable means employed by individuals and the race, in order to allow of passing from one doctrine to another, such being the only essential utility of doubt. This principle, which may be verified in every class of ideas, is *a fortiori* applicable to

[1] In order to simplify this summary examination as much as possible, I do not extend it to points not generally contested, although they might with advantage be presented in a more rational way than is habitually done. For this reason I continue here to regard *education* only on its social side, and not as that theoretical instruction, general or special, which ought to preside over industrial activity This last preparation evidently forms an essential attribute of the Spiritual Power, on the necessity of which I do not insist because it is, I think, doubted by no one

Social Ideas as the most complicated and important of all Modern populations have obeyed this imperative law of our nature even in their revolutionary period, since, whenever it was really necessary for them to act, though for destruction only, they were unavoidably led to give a dogmatic form to ideas purely critical in their essence.

Neither individuals nor the human race are destined to consume their life in a course of sterile reasoning, continually discussing the conduct they ought to observe The mass of the human race is essentially called to *action*, except an imperceptible fraction who, by their nature, are chiefly devoted to contemplation Nevertheless, every sort of action presupposes directing Principles already ascertained, which individuals or the masses have in most cases neither capacity nor time to establish, or even to verify, otherwise than by their results Such, intellectually considered, is the fundamental consideration that decisively justifies the existence of a class absorbed by speculative labours, constantly and exclusively occupied in furnishing all the rest with the general rules of conduct, which they can no more dispense with than create These rules, once admitted, allow the masses to employ their faculties in applying them to practice, only asking for the assistance of the contemplative class when deduction or interpretation presents too many difficulties

Spiritual Guidance also needed for personal and social Morality

This necessity for Spiritual Guidance manifests itself no less clearly, if man is considered not merely as an intelligent, but as a moral, being For even admitting that each individual or collective being could by his unaided faculties form the plan of action best adapted to his own welfare, or to the harmony of the ensemble, it is certain that this doctrine, being generally opposed, more

or less, to the most energetic impulses of human nature, would by itself exert hardly any influence on real life It therefore needs to be, so to speak, vivified by a moral force, regularly organised, which, continually recalling it to the remembrance of each in the interest of all, can impart the energy that results from such universal adhesion, and is alone capable of overcoming, or even adequately counterbalancing, the force of the anti-social dispositions naturally preponderant in human nature

However great the progress of Civilisation may be, it must ever remain true that if the social state is, in certain respects, a continuous state of individual satisfaction, it is also, under other not less necessary aspects, a continuous state of sacrifice To speak more precisely, each person, in every personal act, must experience a certain degree of satisfaction without which Society could not exist, and a certain degree of sacrifice without which it could not maintain itself, having regard to the opposition of individual tendencies which is, in some degree, absolutely inevitable The relative intensity of the former kind of feelings may doubtless increase, and in fact, it does constantly increase, thus creating a progressive amelioration of the human condition But the latter necessity also always exists and its absolute strength even augments continually, through that increasing ardour of desire which our organisation invariably connects with the augmentation of our enjoyments, as an inevitable compensation and an indispensable corrective

The highest attainable state of social perfection would manifestly consist in the fulfilment by each person of the particular office for which he is best adapted in the general system Now, even in such a state of things—itself purely ideal, though capable of being indefinitely approached—men

would need a moral government, because no one could of his own accord confine his personal inclinations within limits suitable to his condition. For Nature and Society will, by common accord, ever assign to different persons functions which afford satisfaction in very various degrees. Natural aptitudes and social positions present an infinite variety as regards both kind and intensity. On the contrary, the instincts that habitually predominate are nearly the same under both aspects in all men, or, at least, they exist in all with sufficient energy to inspire a wish for the enjoyments that others have, let their positions differ as they may. Hence the necessity for developing, by a special influence, the natural morality of man, in order, as much as possible, to bring the impulses of all within the limits required for the general harmony, by habituating them from childhood to a voluntary subordination of their personal interests to the common interest, and by constantly reproducing in active life, with necessary emphasis, the consideration of the social point of view. Without this salutary influence, which extinguishes the evil in its source, Society being constantly obliged to act on individuals, either by violent means or by interest, in order to repress the results of tendencies allowed to develop themselves freely, the maintenance of Order would become impossible, even did this temporal discipline reach its utmost limits. But happily, from the nature of things, the absolute notion of such a mode of government, at once barbarous and illusory, is and can only be, a mere supposition. In truth, Temporal repression never has been, and never will be, anything but the complement of Spiritual repression, which at no time can wholly suffice for social necessities. If, by the natural progress of Civil-

isation, the former unceasingly diminishes, this diminution unavoidably presupposes a proportional increase of the latter

Thus, both under Intellectual and Moral aspects, it is proved that in every established society, the notions of *good* or *evil* intended for the guidance of each person in his various social relations (and even in his purely individual life as far as it can influence these relations), are reducible to *prescriptions* or *prohibitions*, founded and maintained by a properly organised Spiritual Authority, and these, as a whole, constitute the guiding social doctrine [1] In this way, we can explain that long experience of the human race, systematised by Catholic philosophy, in accordance with the profound, though necessarily empirical, knowledge of our nature, so eminently characteristic of it It directly sets forth as a fundamental virtue, the immutable and necessary basis of private and public happiness, *faith*, that is to say, the disposition to place confidence, spontaneously and without previous demonstration, in doctrines proclaimed by a competent authority This, in fact, constitutes the general and indispensable

[1] In the preceding reasoning, I have specially considered Government as exerting rather a repressive than a directing action, in order to make the demonstration harmonise with the habits which generally predominate in political speculations But the same motives evidently apply, with even greater force, when we consider Government no longer as passive merely designed to maintain Order, but as possessing an active function and destined to make all special activities work together for one general end This in my judgment constitutes its principal office, particularly in the social system of modern times Readers who have thoroughly understood the two kinds of considerations above pointed out will transfer them to this new aspect of the question

condition on which depends the establishment and maintenance of a true intellectual and moral communion.

In principle, the influence exerted by the individual upon the regulating doctrine is normally limited to deducing the Practical Rule applicable to each special case; the spiritual organ being consulted in all doubtful cases. But as regards the construction of the doctrine, under every possible aspect, no one possesses any legitimate right beyond that of suggesting its partial rectification, when experience has proved that it fails, in any respect, to fulfil its practical end. To the Spiritual Power, thus warned, it naturally belongs to make suitable changes in the doctrine, after verifying the necessity for them. Such at least is the normal state of things. On any other hypothesis, Society must be considered as being, more or less, in a truly revolutionary state. This state, also necessary at certain determinate epochs, although always transitional, is subjected to special rules of a wholly different nature, with which I need not occupy myself in this place, since I am only prescribing for the normal state.[1]

[1] The gradual and inevitable tendency of Public Opinion to recognise the need for Reorganisation naturally presents a transitional state, already reached by a certain proportion of minds, in which the need of a social doctrine is admitted; while the necessity is not perceived for a class invested with proper authority destined in a special and permanent way to impart life to it. But this half conviction—which is politically sterile, since it amounts to desiring the end without wishing for the means—cannot but attain completeness when it shall prevail widely. For after the mental, moral, and political necessity for a General Doctrine has been really understood, it must soon be felt, not only that every doctrine

The Spiritual Power and Modern Industry

The two classes of general considerations above pointed out have a special application to the social state towards which modern nations tend. For in this new state, characterised as it is by a more complete and ever-increasing separation of the various functions, each person, whatever may be his capacity, can, unaided, grasp but a very small portion of the Doctrine which he needs for his guidance, either industrially or socially. On the other hand, his personal interest, having been narrowed, naturally tends to deviate from the common welfare more frequently, though to a less degree

The evident tendency of modern societies towards an essentially Industrial state, and consequently, towards a political order in which the Temporal Power shall regularly belong to the preponderating Industrial Forces, begins to be generally felt in our day, and the natural course of events will manifest it more and more. The sway unavoidably exercised by the sentiment of a truth so important, though partial, disposes men to overlook or neglect the moral reorganisation of society. It tends to keep up the habit engendered by the Critical Doctrine, and especially encouraged by political economy, of assigning the first place to a purely material point of view in social considerations By looking too exclusively at the immense moral and political advantages which incontestably belong to the industrial state, these are exaggerated so far as to suppose that they

presupposes Founders, but that under each of these three aspects, it imperatively demands Interpreters who, on the other hand, arise spontaneously, so that the idea of *function* and that of *organ* are by the nature of things as inseparable in Social Physics as they are in Physiology.

dispense with a true Spiritual Organisation, or, at least, that this will only possess a secondary importance, when social relations have become purely industrial and are no longer affected, as is still the case, by institutions and habits derived from the military antecedents of society.

We, who should consider this great fact not æsthetically, as artists attracted by its power over the human imagination, but as observers who, neither admiring nor reprobating, admit its existence as a fundamental datum in all speculations on modern Politics, ought as much as possible, to study it under every aspect In this respect, we can easily perceive that the regulating and directing influence of the Spiritual Power is not less necessary for Industrial than for Military relations, although not exactly in the same way. On this subject I limit myself to some general indications, reserving their complete development for another occasion should the question demand it

Even if we suppose, which however is impossible, that the Temporal order corresponding to this new state of Society can establish itself completely, without the intervention of any Spiritual Power, it is certain that in the absence of this conservative influence such a social order could not maintain itself. If, besides those general sources of disorder inherent in every society which render a moral government necessary, the military system presents some peculiar to itself, the same undoubtedly holds true for the purely industrial system; but the special causes are not the same for both and consequently do not attain the same degree of intensity [1]

[1] M Dunoyer, in a work recently published,[2] while proving by luminous remarks on the successive

[2] [*L'Industrie et la Morale*, 1825]

It is no doubt much easier to reconcile individual interests in the modern than in the ancient mode of existence But this happy characteristic which renders the moral rule easier to establish, in no degree dispenses with it, since the antagonism, while less intense, has not disappeared, nay, has become more extensive, by reason of the multiplied points of contact. Thus, to choose the most important example, although hostility between the Chiefs of Industry and the Workmen is socially preferable to that which existed between the Warriors and the Slaves, it is no less real We should hope in vain to destroy it by temporal institutions, which by uniting the material interests of these two classes more intimately, might reduce the arbitrary power they mutually exercise No stable social state can ever be firmly based on mere physical antagonism, the only sort which such institutions can control. Although useful, no doubt, these will always be inadequate, because they necessarily allow the chiefs to entertain the desire, and even to exercise the power, of abusing their position, in order to reduce wages and work, and permit the workmen to obtain by violence what a life of labour cannot procure them. The solution of this grave difficulty necessarily demands

stages of Civilisation, the tendency of existing societies under temporal aspects to a purely industrial state, has guarded himself against the vulgar exaggeration which represents this new mode of existence as absolutely perfect He has devoted the last chapter of his book to a conscientious and severe analysis of the main defects peculiar to industrial society. Although this enumeration is framed with quite a different object from that suggested by my present reflections, and executed in an entirely different spirit, I refer the reader to it to supply the developments which I cannot give in this place.

the continuous influence of a Moral Doctrine, which shall impose upon both Chiefs and Workmen mutual duties in conformity with their mutual relations Now, it is evident that this doctrine can only be founded and maintained by a Spiritual Authority, placed at a point of view sufficiently general to include the whole of these relations, and at the same time sufficiently disinterested in reference to the practical movement, to be above suspicion of partiality from either of the two hostile classes between which it should intervene Similar remarks may be made as to the other great industrial relations, such as those of agriculturists and manufacturers, of either class with merchants, and of all with bankers It is evident that, in all these respects, interests if left completely to their own guidance, without any regulation but such as springs from their antagonism, must always end in direct opposition [1] Hence the absolute necessity for a moral rule, and consequently, for a Spiritual Authority, indispensable for retaining interests within those limits where, instead of being antagonistic, they converge, yet

[1] The commercial and manufacturing crisis which at this moment afflicts the country where industrial activity is greatest, constituting a crisis which may at any moment assume a more or less serious political character, is well fitted to impress on impartial observers the necessity for a certain governmental action, exerted on industrial as, in past times, on military relations No doubt such disturbances are from their nature transitory But social order and individual happiness alike demand guarantees more direct, explicit, and regular against the ever-imminent renewal of these injurious oscillations, such as would not leave each person judge in his own cause, or require the spontaneous and constant consideration of a general point of view, from minds habitually placed at a very special standpoint

from which they constantly endeavour to escape Moreover it would be easy to show that this moral action, considered under both its aspects, must play an indispensable and leading part in establishing temporal institutions destined to complete this regulation of social relations

We should attach too great importance to the demonstrations of Political Economy which prove the necessary harmony of the various industrial interests, were we to hope that this conformity could ever suffice for their discipline.[1] Allowing even to these demonstrations the complete logical extent, much exaggerated in truth, which economists assign to them, it is certain that man does not act only, or even mainly, from calculation, and secondly, that he is not always, or even generally, capable of calculating wisely. The physiology of the nineteenth century, confirming, or, rather, explaining universal experience, has demonstrated the worthlessness of the metaphysical theories which represent man in the light of a calculating machine, solely impelled by self-interest.

Morality, private or public, will therefore of necessity be fluctuating and feeble so long as the exclusive consideration of private interest is taken as the point of departure for each individual or

[1] The essential vice of Political Economy, regarded as a social theory, consists in this Having proved, as to certain matters, far from being the most important, the spontaneous and permanent tendency of human societies towards a certain necessary order, it infers that this tendency does not require to be regulated by positive institutions On the contrary, this great political truth, apprehended in its ensemble, only proves the possibility of the organisation, and leads us to a correct appreciation of its vast importance

class. Yet the industrial spirit naturally leads in that direction, as does every other kind of purely temporal influence, when this appears by itself, and without having experienced that regulative moral action which can only proceed from a Spiritual Power rightly organised Even could we conceive a society entirely and exclusively abandoned to the direct impulse of a purely temporal activity, the new political order (if this name could be given to it) would have no other real advantage over the old one (considered likewise under the same abstract hypothesis) than that of substituting monopoly for conquest, and a despotism founded on the right of the wealthiest for a despotism founded on the right of the strongest. Such would be the extreme, yet inevitable, consequences of a purely temporal social organisation, could such an hypothesis ever be realised. Happily, however mistaken may be our political views, the nature of things preserves Society from the unmitigated influence of its own aberrations, and the final order which arises spontaneously is always superior to that which human combinations had, by anticipation, constructed

The necessity for a Spiritual Order in the new social state manifests itself not alone as regards the relations of individuals or classes, but in reference to merely personal morality. In the first place, a general consideration, derived from the study of human nature and pointed out by nearly all philosophers in every age, shows that the most solid basis of the social virtues is to be found in the practice of the personal virtues, since in this way man can test most severely his power of resisting the vicious impulses of his natural propensities. But apart from this general reason, the inevitable influence which purely individual acts indirectly exert over society in any system of social relations,

reveals itself specially in the modern system and, consequently, furnishes a new motive for the moral regulation of society. To cite only one example: since the appearance of the works of Mr Malthus, it is generally admitted that the continual tendency of population to increase more rapidly than the means of subsistence, a tendency which is especially developed in industrial societies, demands a certain degree of permanent repression as regards the most energetic of human impulses. Now, such repression, it is evident, cannot be adequately effected by any but a moral authority, whatever may be the incontestable influence of temporal measures in restraining this instinct within proper limits.

This Power is needed for Direction as well as Repression.

For the general reason above stated, I have hitherto considered only the Preventive or Repressive action of the Spiritual Power in the new system of social relations. Its importance becomes still more evident when its Directive action is also considered

Even were it hypothetically admitted that in the new social state, Order could be spontaneously maintained without any special regulative influence, it is undeniably true that for collective action, such as the nature of the system would in many cases require, individuals and classes stand in need of a direction founded upon common doctrines, laid down by the Spiritual Power in the social education, and afterwards constantly enforced by it in real life. The necessity for such a doctrine is in this respect the greater, because the classification of individuals being under this system of necessity far more variable than in the old one, each person is thus naturally less prepared for the special function which he should fulfil. So long as employments were essentially here-

ditary, domestic education might be considered a sufficient preparation This is no longer the case, now that they tend to a distribution conformable to individual aptitudes Public education, general or special, then acquires far more importance, as supplying the only rational means of determining these aptitudes, at first so slightly marked in the majority of cases, and at the same time of properly developing them. The action of the Spiritual Power becomes, then, all the more indispensable for establishing and maintaining a social classification in harmony with the spirit of the system. By considering the number of failures and false positions which now result from the absence of intellectual and moral guidance, and endeavouring to estimate their deplorable results for individuals and society, we shall comprehend the importance of the preceding reflection

Such, speaking generally, are the principal grounds which assign a wide and fundamental influence to the Spiritual Power, regarded simply as to its National functions

International action of the Spiritual Power

The same general considerations are equally applicable to the necessary action which the Spiritual Power ought to exert in regulating International relations. I can therefore dispense with any explicit indication of this extension, which every attentive reader can easily make, by keeping to the fundamental point of view afforded by the preceding arguments

The only essential difference between the two cases consists in the greater generality of the second order of social relations But if this distinction shows that the regulative action of the Spiritual Power is of necessity less intense in relation to European than to National order, it also proves that the Spiritual Power is even more

indispensable (having due regard to the importance of the relations), and especially, that it is still less susceptible of being replaced by any other influence

International relations being at once more extended and more continuous in modern civilisation than in that of the Middle Age, their regulation becomes still more needful. The collective action of European society which in the Old system only arose at distant intervals, should become in the New one, if not strictly permanent, at least very frequent. It is demanded, either by operations of common utility which call for the cooperation of two or more Nations, or by the general influence, partly of a repressive character, which the most civilised Nations ought to exert over those less civilised, in the common interest of all. These various motives may possibly prove sufficiently powerful to cause the formation of a certain degree of temporal sovereignty, embracing several of the most advanced populations But on any hypothesis, they incontestably necessitate the establishment of a social doctrine, common to the various Nations, and consequently, of a Spiritual sovereignty fitted to uphold this doctrine, by organising a European education, and to apply it properly to the actual relations Until this takes place, European order will always stand on the verge of disturbance, notwithstanding the action, alike despotic and inadequate (although provisionally indispensable), exerted by the imperfect coalition of the old Temporal Powers, which can present no solid guarantee for security, since by its very nature it is always on the point of dissolution [1]

[1] M de la Mennais has clearly proved that from its purely temporal character and the total disparity of its constituent elements,—the latter being the

Industrial interests incapable of regulating International relations

I must point out here, as in the preceding case, though more briefly, the false political conceptions which, in our day, tend to produce an incomplete view of the temporal future of Society, representing International relations as sufficiently regulated by the mere circumstance of their having reached a purely Industrial stage. Doubtless this new mode of existence possesses the happy property of facilitating the moral association of Nations, as well as

necessary result of the former,—the institution of the Holy Alliance can offer neither real fixity nor sufficient efficacy, even passively, and still less, actively. This philosopher has convincingly proved that such an institution, from its very nature, cannot offer to modern Europe the true equivalent for the general action exerted in the Middle Age by the old Spiritual Power, and that this can only be replaced by another spiritual influence.

But we should, nevertheless, consider the formation of the Holy Alliance as a forced result of the unavoidable disorganisation of the old social system, which has rendered necessary, especially as regards European order, the momentary absorption of the Spiritual Power by the Temporal Power, and at the same time, as an indispensable, though very imperfect, instrument of preserving a certain state of provisional order in Europe, as long as the moral interregnum shall last. The revolutionary state should not be judged by the same rules as the normal state. We may even add that the establishment of the Holy Alliance, regarded as replacing the Balance of Power in Europe, points to the sentiment, vague and imperfect indeed, but real, of the necessity for a European reorganisation, while it, to a certain extent, paves the way for this, by accustoming nations, contrary to critical prejudices, to consider this class of relations as being properly subject to the direct and permanent action of Government.

that of individuals or classes; but in the former as in the latter case it does not dispense with the Spiritual Power, rather, by multiplying and extending relations, renders it more necessary Let us imagine for an instant that the temporal order of Europe could completely lose the military character and acquire a purely industrial character, without any spiritual reorganisation preceding and determining the change, though this supposition is assuredly self-contradictory. Even on this abstract hypothesis, it is certain that the system would possess no solidity if the various Nations were systematically abandoned to mere temporal impulses, without subordinating them to any common moral doctrine, established and maintained by a Spiritual Power. For individual interest, conceived as the only direct basis of a plan of action, can afford a solid foundation for the morality of Nations in a less degree even than for that of individuals and classes In truth, even supposing that action can be exclusively or mainly guided by calculation,—a proposition as untrue for Nations as for individuals,—the relation between the well-being of each and that of all is both less pronounced and less perceptible in European than in National order It is very difficult and, consequently, rare for the real happiness of an individual to harmonise completely with conduct which is decidedly anti-social. Such harmony is much easier, and therefore more common, in the case of a Nation, even under the industrial system, as experience has too clearly proved since the foundation of the colonial and protectionist system, still supported by the prevailing opinion In like manner, an individual, by ceasing to lead an active existence, might perhaps mentally place himself at the national point of view and to a certain extent grasp it, if he had sufficient capacity.

But that is far more difficult when we must raise ourselves to the European point of view, and a social organisation which permanently demanded such an effort in a large number of men, or even only in the leaders of the Nations, would be manifestly impossible

Even if the exaggerated theories of the economists as to the necessary and invariable identity of the industrial interests common to the various Nations were absolutely true, they would inevitably be still more incapable of regulating International relations than those between individuals, by the mere conviction they could produce In vain do the nations endeavour in our day, more or less decidedly, to pass out of the protectionist system Were this result completely attained, the spirit of industrial hostility could not fail to reproduce itself under new forms which it could readily create, if each nation continued indefinitely to admit no other rule of conduct than the satisfaction of its own interest, apart from any moral duty towards others The only power really capable of restraining within proper limits this natural rivalry of the Nations and of utilising it by limiting it, as a rule, to a legitimate emulation, is that furnished by a general doctrine concerning the actual relations of Nations, established and habitually proclaimed by a Spiritual Authority which, speaking to each nation in the name of all, finds in their universal assent the necessary support for asserting its decisions

Conclusion

As the final result of all the preceding considerations, we have verified in detail this fundamental proposition, established above on general grounds · the social state towards which Modern Nations tend, no less than that of the Middle Age, both as to active and passive relations, and for general and special reasons,

demands a Spiritual (that is to say, intellectual and moral) Organisation, at once European and National.

I shall on another occasion investigate, in the same spirit, under its chief aspects, the nature of this Organisation, which by a necessary abstraction, I have been obliged to leave unsettled, in order to facilitate a demonstration in itself so complicated This new exposition, besides its great importance, will perhaps dispel the obscurity which, to a certain extent, unavoidably attaches itself in most minds to an abstract point of view; and, especially, it will destroy the false interpretations which existing habits generally dispose people to put upon the conception of a Spiritual Power. Such, at least, is my hope.

SIXTH AND LAST ESSAY

(*August* 1828)

EXAMINATION OF BROUSSAIS' TREATISE ON IRRITATION[1]

[*Note to the Sixth Essay.*—This Essay is concerned with biological and psychological rather than social questions. It was, however, thought desirable to include it in this edition of the Early Essays because Comte himself grouped it with the other five Essays on Social Philosophy, as marking the transition from his preliminary sketch of Sociology to his systematic treatise on the Philosophy of the Sciences. Although this Essay is not directly concerned with the subject of Sociology, there are several passages in it bearing upon questions discussed in the preceding Essays. In particular, a clear distinction is here drawn between Physiology, that is, Biology, and Social Physics, and the necessity of basing all study of mental phenomena upon Biology is insisted on.

Some readers of this Essay may be puzzled by Comte's wholesale condemnation of 'psychology.' They may be reminded that the date of this Essay is 1828, and that Comte's criticisms were really directed against a contemporary school of French writers, of which Cousin was the head, who called themselves 'psychologists.' These writers were metaphysicians who adopted the term 'psychology' and brought it into such discredit by their fantastic theories about the 'internal eye' and so forth that Comte preferred not to use the word himself. Psy-

[1] [*De l'irritation et de la folie*, 1828. Par F. J. V. Broussais.]

chology is now a well-defined and thoroughly positive study, and the modern psychologist makes extensive use of the methods of the physical and biological laboratories. When Comte wrote this Essay, the state of things was very different, and Biology itself had only recently been established on a positive basis. That Comte, in denying the possibility of internal observation as a means of psychological investigation, went too far in his quite natural and thoroughly justifiable opposition to the 'introspectionists' must, I think, be conceded. He apparently forgot the fact pointed out by J. S. Mill that although we cannot observe our own mental processes at the moment of occurrence, we can immediately after recall these processes to mind, and then treat them as past events. In this way *retrospection* enables us to study our mental operations in very much the same way as we study the phenomena of Mind in other organisms, whether of our own species or in the case of the lower animals; and it is obvious that we can only understand the mental life of other organisms by interpreting it in terms of our own intelligence. It is very interesting in this connection to note what Comte says on p. 340 of this Essay—"Thus man cannot directly observe his intellectual operations; he can only observe his organs, and their results. The former class of observations are embraced by Physiology. The great results of human intelligence being the Sciences, the latter class embraces their philosophy, which is inseparable from the Sciences themselves. There is, therefore, no place for psychology, or the direct study of the soul independently of any external consideration." Now, the sciences have been built up by the exercise of the racial intelligence, the 'results' being preserved permanently by means of printed signs. In the same way, the individual thinker can obtain positive 'results' from the study of his own mental operations, viewed impassively as past events. It is quite true, as Comte said, that you cannot think and observe your thoughts at the same time; at all events, it is impossible to obtain correct observations in that way. But it is quite possible to think, and then to use your recollected

thoughts as psychological material for subsequent analysis and study It should, in fairness to Comte, be added that the method of *introspection*, or, rather, *retrospection*, is of only limited application, and its use needs to be controlled by the institution of standard conditions, to avoid the errors of observation which personal bias, etc, might otherwise occasion

That, putting aside the question of *introspection*, Comte's view of the nature of psychology was a thoroughly scientific one, is shown in this Essay by his remarks on the necessity for comparative studies of the subject And the reader should bear in mind that Comte was the first writer to grasp the full significance of the important truth that psychical phenomena, in the case of Man, are the product of two distinct factors, *biological* and *social* He was thus the true founder of Social Psychology —H G J]

The modern Intellectual Movement

SINCE the termination of the sixteenth century, the human intellect has undergone a general and continuous revolution, consisting in the gradual and complete recasting of the entire system of human knowledge, henceforward placed on its true bases, Observation and Reasoning This fundamental revolution, prepared by the successive labours of all preceding centuries, especially from the commencement of Arabian influence, was definitively determined and directly commenced by the profound and new impulse simultaneously impressed upon the human reason by the conceptions of Descartes, the precepts of Bacon, and the discoveries of Galileo Since this memorable epoch, the human mind, in every branch of knowledge, has tended, constantly and increasingly, towards its complete and final emancipation from the domination previously exercised by Theology and Metaphysics, by entirely subordinating Imagination to Observation In a word, man has en-

deavoured to constitute the definitive system of Positive Philosophy.

Physiology has only lately become a true Science.

All the various branches of human knowledge have not undergone this important renovation with an equal degree of rapidity. It necessarily affected them in succession according to the complexity and mutual dependence of the phenomena which they embraced. Physiology,[1] as the part of Natural Philosophy which studies the most complex and least independent phenomena, of necessity remained longer than any other science under the yoke of theological fictions and metaphysical abstractions. Accordingly, it was only in the second half of the last century, and after Astronomy, Physics, and Chemistry had become positive sciences, that Physiology began to experience, in its turn, this great and salutary transformation through the immortal works of Haller, Charles Bonnet, Daubenton, Spallanzani, Vicq-d'Azyr, Chaussier, Bichat, Cuvier, Pinel, Cabanis, etc.

Cabanis and Gall on mental and moral phenomena

But in order that this revolution might be complete and efficacious, its extension to the Intellectual and Moral phenomena became necessary, for these unavoidably underwent it later than the other animal phenomena, as being more complex and closely connected with theological and metaphysical theories of the constitution of society. Thus the memoirs published at the beginning of this century by Cabanis[2] on the connection between the physical and moral

[1] [Physiology, i.e., Biology. See note at end of Author's Preface.]

[2] [*Rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme*, 1802.]

nature, were the first great and direct effort to bring within the domain of scientific Physiology this study, previously abandoned entirely to the theological and metaphysical methods The impulse imparted to the human mind by these memorable investigations has not fallen off. The labours of M. Gall and his school have singularly strengthened it, and especially, have impressed on this new and final portion of Physiology a high degree of precision, by supplying a definite basis of discussion and investigation. In our day it may be said that this revolution, though not yet become popular, is definitely terminated for all intellects really on a level with their age, who regard the study of the intellectual and moral functions as inseparably connected with that of all other physiological phenomena, and as properly investigated by the same methods and in the same spirit

Pseudo-psychology

However, some, misconceiving in this respect the actual and unalterable direction of the human mind, have endeavoured during the last ten years to transplant among us German metaphysics and to found under the name of *psychology* a pretended science, completely independent of Physiology, superior to it, and exclusively embracing the study of the phenomena specially termed *moral* Although these retrograde efforts cannot stop the development of real knowledge, since the passing enthusiasm which they excite only results from foreign and accidental circumstances, they undoubtedly exert a mischievous influence, by retarding in many minds the development of a true philosophic spirit and wasting much intellectual activity

This situation has been profoundly appreciated by M Broussais Without exaggerating the mischief, he has worthily comprehended the import-

ance of opposing the vague and chimerical pursuit in which it is sought to engage the young generation of France. Accordingly, he thought it right to interrupt his great works on general pathology in order to demonstrate the emptiness and nullity of psychology. Such is the general and essential aim of his new work, as he himself explicitly declares in a very remarkable preface, in which he is not afraid of showing himself superior to the pious accusations of materialism, which our psychologists, following the example of the theologians, their predecessors, have not ceased to heap on their adversaries. In this respect, independently of the eminent merit of his work, M. Broussais by its publication has done a signal act of courage, deserving the gratitude of all right minds. Its value can be fully estimated by those only who know to what an extent the scientific men of to-day, though entertaining for metaphysical theories the profound disdain these inspire in all intellects reared in positive studies, carefully avoid combating by public discussion the supremacy they assume in our time.

Futility of the method of Internal Observation

The work of M. Broussais completely attains the author's chief aim. Entering more profoundly into the subject than any physiologist has hitherto done, he has directly examined the pretended method of Internal Observation put forward by psychologists as the basis of the science of man.

The ascendancy which the positive sciences have acquired since the time of Bacon is now such that the psychologists, in order to restore the discredited authority of metaphysics, felt themselves obliged to represent their labours as being also based upon Observation. With this object they devised the distinction between external facts, forming the subject of ordinary science, and in-

ternal facts, or those of consciousness, peculiar to psychology M. Broussais shows the inanity of this pretended distinction In the fifth chapter of the first part he institutes a physiological analysis, extremely remarkable for its depth and refinement, of the condition of a mind reflecting on its own acts This analysis renders quite evident the impossibility of arriving at any real discovery by a method so illusory I regret that I can only cite a few passages

"Let us now examine," he observes, "what psychologists can find in their consciousness by adopting this sort of research They are sure to meet with sensations proceeding from viscera which communicate incessantly with the brain, such as hunger, amorous desires, cold, heat, specific pains, or pleasures, localised in any part of the body They will further remark a crowd of vague undetermined sensations, disposing sometimes to sorrow, sometimes to joy, at one time to action, at another to repose, one day to hope, the next to despair and even to horror of existence They will find all these without suspecting whence they come, for physiologists are the only persons who can inform them about this If they take all these internal sensations for revelations of the divinity which they name consciousness, they can increase their treasures by taking, in Oriental fashion, a certain quantity of opium combined with aromatics"

Notwithstanding the masterly way in which M Broussais has treated this question, he might, I think, have dealt with it more directly and proved that such internal observation is necessarily impossible

Man can observe what is external to him and also certain functions of his organs, other than the thinking organ. To a certain extent he can even observe himself, as regards the different passions

he feels, because the cerebral organs on which these depend are distinct from the observing organ properly so called, though even this assumes that the emotional state is but slightly pronounced. It is, however, evidently impossible for him to observe his own intellectual acts, for the organ observed and the observing organ being in this case identical, by whom could the observation be made? The illusion of psychologists on this head is analogous to that of some former philosophers, who believed they could explain vision, by saying that the luminous rays painted *images* of external objects on the retina Physiologists have judiciously pointed out that if luminous impressions acted as images on the retina, another eye would be needed to look at these It is the same with the pretended internal observation of intelligence To render this possible, the individual would have to divide himself into two persons, one thinking, the other observing the thoughts. Thus man cannot directly observe his intellectual operations, he can only observe his organs, and their results The former class of observations are embraced by Physiology The great results of human intelligence being the Sciences, the latter class embraces their philosophy, which is inseparable from the Sciences themselves There is, therefore, no place for psychology, or the direct study of the soul independently of any external consideration

Need of Comparative Psychology

In the parallel, otherwise so satisfactory and decisive, which M. Broussais establishes between Physiology and psychology, we could have wished he had more clearly shown the inferiority of the latter, which, even admitting its pretended methods of exploration, only considers the adult and healthy man, making a complete abstraction of the animals and even of mankind in the condition of imperfect

development or disordered organisation, while in every physiological investigation, the point of view presented by normal man is always admirably combined with that of the ensemble of the animal series, and the pathological state This difference which M Broussais only partially notices, indicated with that clearness and vigour of exposition that distinguish him, would have presented a useful contrast to the superior insight and profundity on which our psychologists pride themselves

The opposite error of Condillac and Helvetius

A more serious omission made by M Broussais is his not having clearly pointed out the immense difference which exists between the physiological doctrine of man, intellectual and moral, and the theories of the metaphysicians of the last century, who saw in our intelligence only the action of the external senses, disregarding every predisposition of the internal cerebral organs The well-founded objections to the ideology of Condillac and Helvetius alone give some justification to the influence of the existing psychology, which, moreover, merely popularises, by obscure and emphatic declamations, what physiologists such as Charles Bonnet, Cabanis, and especially MM Gall and Spurzheim, had long before put forward on this subject, much more clearly and precisely M Broussais will no doubt be anxious to remove this single resource from psychology, or what he so judiciously calls *ontology*. I suggest to him with confidence this important amelioration for a second edition, which cannot fail to be soon demanded for such a work The omission which I point out assuredly proceeded only from the rapid way in which his book was manifestly composed, for psychologists cannot assert that he shows himself anywhere a declared adherent of the metaphysics of the eighteenth century

Social Physics distinct from Physiology

A general review of the work of M. Broussais gives rise to a final philosophical reflection of great importance, namely, that the author has not circumscribed more accurately than his predecessors among physiologists the true domain of Physiology

When Cabanis, first among physiologists, directly claimed for Physiology the study of moral phenomena, he did not sufficiently separate, or, rather, he confounded, the study of individual man and that of the human race collectively regarded Both of them, in his view, belonged to an indivisible science, philosophy. This confusion was maintained by MM Gall and Spurzheim, it still subsists in the minds of nearly all the physiologists who seriously apply themselves to the portion of their science which concerns moral phenomena M Broussais has made no attempt to dissipate it, although from some passages of his work he seems to have felt its chief defect

It is clear, in fact, that the study of the Individual and that of the Race, although so intimately related that they might be regarded as constituting two parts of a single science, are nevertheless sufficiently distinct and, above all, sufficiently extensive, to admit of being separately cultivated, and therefore conceived as forming two sciences, Physiology properly so called and Social Physics. The latter is without doubt based on the former, which supplies it both with a positive point of departure and guidance But it forms no less a separate science, requiring special observations on the history of the development of human society, and special methods. It could not by any possibility be treated simply as a direct deduction from the science of the individual, unless, indeed,

as regards animals, since their social development is so limited as not to require a distinct study. If Physiology is not yet completely and definitively constituted, if its scientific field is not exactly ascertained, this mainly springs from the circumstance that the division in question has not yet been regularly established and unanimously admitted. This unsettled condition of the science, even in the case of the most distinguished intellects, is the only thing which, if it were prolonged, could justify the criticisms and pretensions of the psychologists, although it is evident that the study of social phenomena no more falls within their metaphysical methods than that of individual phenomena

Such are the chief philosophical reflections suggested to me by the work of M Broussais, regarded from the author's general point of view.

Value of this work of Broussais

Notwithstanding the remarks I have thought it right to offer on this subject, the work is entirely worthy of its distinguished author. For the honour of the public, whose sympathies are now invoked in favour of the retrograde path of metaphysics, I hope that it will obtain a success proportioned to its importance. It ought powerfully to aid the natural progress of the human mind, by bringing into general discredit the vague and chimerical speculations which retard the progress of real knowledge Since the memoirs of Cabanis and the works of MM Gall and Spurzheim, no work has appeared so well fitted to make clear the worthlessness of that illusory science of personified abstractions, well described by M Cuvier in his remark, that it employs metaphor for reasoning, and which M Broussais himself has so happily defined as *a work of imagination closely resembling*

poetry. It exhibits in its true light that assemblage of incoherent opinions, of necessity varying, not only from one individual to another, but even in the same person, with the varying dispositions of his organisation It dissipates for ever that mystical spirit, so flattering to pretentious ignorance, which inspires an instinctive repugnance towards every special and positive study, by presenting empty abstractions as superior to all real knowledge, and which replunges us into the state of infancy by re-establishing, in a new form, the empire of theological conceptions.

Positive Pathology based on General Anatomy Bichat and Broussais

M Broussais may be considered as the founder of Positive Pathology, that is to say, of the science which connects the perturbations of vital phenomena with the lesions of organs or tissues From the time when Physiology began to be a real science, towards the middle of the last century, several of the co-operators in this great movement of the human mind, especially Morgagni and Bonnet, directed their attention to the seats of diseases But these works did not change the general spirit of pathology, which persisted in representing the majority of important diseases as independent of any change in the normal state of the organs Such researches could not even exert any marked influence on the science, until the fundamental distinction between organs and tissues had been established by the genius of Bichat, because it is in the tissues more particularly and not in the organs that lesions should be studied M Broussais, starting from the General Anatomy founded by Bichat, placed Pathology on its true basis, presenting it as the investigation of deteriorations to which the tissues are liable and of the phenomena thence resulting He first clearly recognised and formally proclaimed

that almost all recognised diseases are only symptoms, and that functional derangements cannot subsist without the lesion of organs or, rather, of tissues

Had M. Broussais confined his efforts to establishing this general principle he would, no doubt, have avoided the greater part of the criticisms that have been directed against his works , but he could not thus have effected the important scientific renovation which his school has accomplished, and which banishes metaphysics from their last asylum For that it was indispensable, not only to represent every malady as dependent on some organic lesion—a proposition in itself hardly debatable—but to determine the precise seat of each of the maladies considered to have no special seat This M Broussais accomplished, mainly by reducing the six alleged essential fevers to inflammations of the mucous membrane of the stomach and intestine, theretofore neglected by physicians I need not consider whether M Broussais has subsequently exaggerated the influence of gastritis and gastro-enteritis on the production of the different morbid symptoms , though this was almost unavoidable But impartial minds, if disposed to blame such exaggerations, should consider the philosophic necessity under which M Broussais laboured of assigning an organ to each recognised affection, in order to place the discussion on a positive basis We should reflect that even if he has erred as to the real seat of a particular malady, it was better for pathology, and even for therapeutics, to propose a seat at variance with the true one than none at all. M Broussais has thus definitely led thinkers to the true road of observation, where even while combating his ideas, they can only serve the progress of science

Relations between Health and Disease

The first part of the work now published by M. Broussais is a treatise on Irritation It may be considered as an exposition of the highest generalities of the doctrine of the author. No one has ever conceived in so direct and satisfactory a manner the fundamental relation between Physiology and Pathology, and M Broussais' deep appreciation of this relation best characterises his intellect.

Setting out from the great general truth, partially seen by Brown, that Life is only sustained by stimulation, and making it his own by important applications, M Broussais represents all Diseases as essentially consisting in the excess or deficiency of stimulation of the different tissues, either rising above or falling below the degree which constitutes the normal condition This conception throws a great light on the nature of Diseases, by exhibiting them as results of mere changes of intensity in the action of stimulants indispensable for maintaining health

Having established that stimulation of the organs is more frequently in excess than in defect, and even that a diminution in the action of stimulants on one organ generally produces irritation in other organs,—as between the stomach and brain,—M Broussais distinguishes three degrees of abnormal excitement of organs,— over-excitement properly so called, sub-inflammation, and inflammation He expounds the characters of these three states as affecting the chief organic systems, especially the nervous system, which he, in accordance with the majority of living physiologists, represents as the general agent of the sympathies M Broussais even pushes the physiological analysis of the various tissues farther than has yet been done , for he considers the organic elements

of which all the tissues are composed. These he reduces to three, fibrine, gelatine, and albumen, and examines the phenomena of irritation in each. This view must hereafter introduce a great and valuable simplicity into the first principles of Physiology and Pathology

Irritability a general phenomenon of Life

I must not omit to point out, as a marked improvement in the physiological doctrine of M Broussais, the disappearance of those Vital Properties admitted, or, rather, retained by Bichat, which imparted a certain metaphysical character to the fundamental conceptions of Physiology. M Broussais replaces these by the uniform property of Irritability that exists in all tissues, yet manifests itself in each by different phenomena This conception tends to purify Physiology from the residuum of metaphysics which Bichat felt it necessary to preserve At the same time, it definitively assigns to the physics of living bodies a character clearly distinct from that of the physics of inorganic bodies, for the notion of Irritation comprises everything that belongs to the state of Life This condition was no less indispensable for constituting a truly positive Physiology, but had not yet been sufficiently fulfilled by the physiologists who endeavoured to free their science completely from metaphysical conceptions.

Some defects in Broussais' work

This first part of the work of M. Broussais abounds in elevated and new views I shall only blame him for a certain obscurity of language and, especially, an almost complete absence of method in the arrangement of his ideas The too frequent intermixture of physiological with pathological conceptions introduces a sort of confusion which renders it difficult, even for an attentive and well-informed reader, to grasp the general spirit of this remarkable

work This imperfection may be remedied in a new edition, if M Broussais, as I doubt not, feels the necessity for more fully maturing his chief conceptions, determining their character more precisely, and estimating the scope of each more exactly We ought not to lose sight of the serious general motive which led to the publication of this work,—the necessity for combating Ontology, which once more endeavours to lay hold of the mind of the existing generation On this ground we may excuse a vice of method which the author would assuredly have avoided, if he could have devoted the necessary time to the elaboration of his work Nevertheless, M Broussais should not forget that this work contains the leading ideas for a general treatise on Life, considered both in its normal and its abnormal state His celebrity will be advanced if he himself executes a work so necessary for the future progress of science

M Broussais, when revising his work, will doubtless feel that his treatment of the Nervous System does not adequately recognise the importance of the fundamental distinction between the two nervous systems,—cerebral and ganglionic He has not paid sufficient attention to the latter, considered physiologically or pathologically It would also have been better had M Broussais taken more largely into consideration Comparative Anatomy, and avowedly sought to bring his views on human organisation into harmony with the whole of the animal series, a condition now indispensable to every great physiological conception, which he has no doubt implicitly fulfilled

Application of Pathology to the theory and treatment of Insanity

I have little to say upon the second part of this work which treats of Insanity It is a natural application of the principles established in the first part to the special case of irritation

in the brain This well-executed application throws a strong light on the principles themselves The execution of this is much more satisfactory than that of the preceding part. It adds nothing of great importance to the existing state of that important branch of Pathology But the knowledge already gained on this subject is summarised with a clearness and a perfection of method very superior to what all existing treatises offer, thus rendering an essential service to science Its perusal is admirably fitted to avert or cure the contagion of psychology. As regards the personal contributions of the author to ideas, I observe that while placing the seat of Insanity in the brain, in common with all living physiologists, M Broussais characterises much more precisely than they do, the state of cerebral irritation which produces Insanity He also offers some new and very judicious views as to the indications derivable from post-mortem examinations He shows that since the state of inflammation which disorganises the tissues, and in consequence leaves after death the only visible traces commonly considered, is simply the highest degree of the state of irritation that deranges the normal functions, it is quite possible that this derangement may arise from an excessive stimulation, without leaving any inflammatory changes discoverable after death M Broussais thus indirectly destroys the only reasonable objection made to positive pathology by the metaphysical pathologists of the school of Montpellier, who from the absence, in certain cases, of lesions in the dead body, infer the reality of diseases termed *essential*

Persons who, on the faith of vulgar prejudices to which men of science should be inaccessible, imagine that M Broussais subordinates everything in the animal economy to the stomach must

derive from the perusal of this work a juster idea of the range and elevation of his intellect. He exhibits in all its intensity the vast sympathetic influence exerted by the digestive viscera on all the organs, and especially on the brain; an influence which has not been always properly appreciated by physiologists specially devoted to the study of the nervous system. But in his work no exaggerated idea on this head is perceptible, he states nothing but what is well attested by observation

The doctrine of Gall

When treating of monomanias M Broussais profits by the opportunity to render a deserved tribute to the important works of MM Gall and Spurzheim and of the phrenological school on the brain I must congratulate him on this act of justice, which is at the same time an act of courage, for it still requires courage in men of science to declare publicly in favour of doctrines so contrary to official opinions In this doctrine, imperfect as it still is, M. Broussais recognises the great light which it throws on the study of human nature. He seems to have felt how much this important reformation aids the general tendency of the human mind towards a completely positive Philosophy

M Broussais, however, offers some objections to the doctrine of M Gall Of these the greater part appear to me to be without any solid foundation. One only is really well founded, that is, the reproach of not taking sufficiently into account the great influence exerted on the brain by the digestive and generative viscera It is certain that this influence, though a good deal exaggerated by physiologists before MM Gall and Spurzheim, has been far too much neglected by the phrenological school, and that in this respect the fundamental ideas of the new doctrine of the brain

require to be submitted to a more complete investigation.

Treatment of the Insane

As regards the practical treatment of Insanity the considerations submitted by M. Broussais add little to the mass of acquired knowledge; but the therapeutics of this malady are conceived and expounded in a much more rational spirit than in any other treatise The author considers the ordinary treatment too passive He thinks, with reason, that severe bleeding, judiciously applied at the outset of the disease, is calculated to cut short incipient forms of Insanity, as in acute pneumonia and gastritis M Broussais justly insists, as all writers since Pinel have done, on the importance of moral treatment. But it is surprising that while recommending Asylums as an indispensable condition for that purpose, he omits to point out the extreme negligence with which this essential element of treatment is generally conducted in these institutions. No doubt M Broussais was not able to observe with sufficient care the mode in which the majority of these establishments are kept: he believed them to be constituted and administered as they might and should be. Had he studied them himself, he would have been convinced that despite the promises of their directors, the entire intellectual and moral portion of the treatment is, in fact, abandoned to the arbitrary action of subordinates and rough agents, whose conduct almost always aggravates the malady which they should assist to cure

Estimate of Broussais

Such are the main considerations which I have to offer on M Broussais' new work My aim has not been to make it known, but only to characterise its spirit, and to show, to all who interest themselves in the progress of Physiology, the necessity for studying it